MOPAN Assessment Report

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

2020 Assessment Cycle

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MOPAN

Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

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2020 Assessment Cycle

United National Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

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Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

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Preface

ABOUT MOPAN

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) comprises 21 countries* that share a common interest in assessing the performance of the major multilateral organisations they fund. A MOPAN assessment report seeks to provide a diagnostic assessment, or snapshot, of an organisation and tell the story of an organisation's current performance, within its mandate. It is conducted through a rigorous process and takes a collaborative approach to ensure that the findings resonate with the organisation and its stakeholders. It draws on multiple lines of evidence (documentary, survey, and interviews) from sources within and outside an organisation to validate and triangulate findings set against a standard indicator framework that was developed based on international best practice.

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The following Operating Principles guide the implementation of MOPAN assessments, and MOPAN's Methodology Manual describes how these principles are realised.

Operating principles

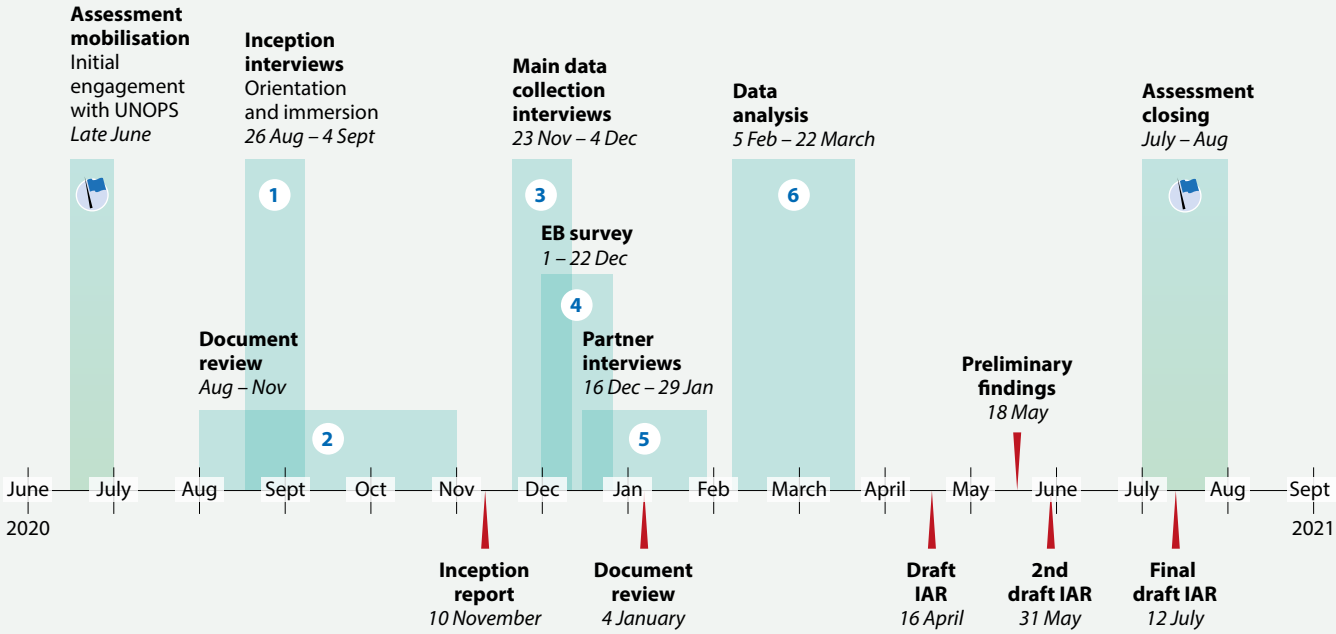
MOPAN will generate credible, fair and accurate assessments through:

- **implementing** an impartial, systematic and rigorous approach
- **balancing breadth with depth**, adopting an appropriate balance between coverage and depth of information
- **prioritising quality** of information over quantity
- **adopting a systematic approach**, including the use of structured tools for enquiry/analysis
- **providing transparency**, generating an "audit trail" of findings
- **being efficient**, building layers of data, seeking to reduce burdens on organisations
- **ensuring utility**, building organisational learning through an iterative process and accessible reporting
- **being incisive**, through a focused methodology, which provides concise reporting to tell the story of an organisation's current performance

Applying these principles, MOPAN generates, collects, analyses and presents relevant and credible information on organisational and development effectiveness. This knowledge base is intended to contribute to organisational learning within and among the organisations, their direct clients and partners, and other stakeholders. Network members use the reports for their own accountability needs and as a source of input for strategic decision-making.

Note that the assessment report is structure to present a high-level overview of findings across the body of the text (in Chapters 2 and 3), and that more detailed analysis underlying each score, as well as full referencing, is available in Annex A.

MOPAN ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR UNOPS



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MOPAN is very grateful to the Institutional Leads, Marie-Line Seferian and Sarah Weber, from France and the United States of America, for championing this assessment of UNOPS on behalf of the MOPAN membership.

The external partner survey was administered by Cristina Serra-Vallejo from the MOPAN Secretariat, together with Emna Ben-Khedher supported the implementation and finalisation of the survey.

Andrew Esson provided the layout and graphic design. The report also benefited from an external peer review, conducted by Ole Winckler Andersen.

IOD PARC, an independent consultancy specialising in assessing performance and managing change in the field of international development conducted this assessment. Dorte Kabell served as Team Lead for the assessment of UNOPS, working with Matthew Crump (Principal Assessor), Sonia Pérez (Senior Assessor), and Oscar Arnstein (Researcher). The assessment benefited from the review and guidance of Simon Henderson and logistical support from Emma Buchy-Dury.

MOPAN is grateful to its Steering Committee representatives for supporting the assessment of UNOPS. Finally, MOPAN would like to convey appreciation to UNOPS management and personnel for their input and comments at various stages, in particular Nicholas O'Regan and Neil Donovan who internally coordinated the process, and all who provided substantive feedback throughout the assessment process.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AFR	Africa Region
BSSC	Bangkok Shared Service Centre
CAT-I	Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
DoA	Delegation of Authority
DRiVE	Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement
EAC	Engagement Acceptance Committee
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECR	Europe and Central Asia Region
ED	Executive Director
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EOD	Executive Office Directive
EOI	Executive Office Instruction
GA	General Assembly
GFATM	Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GRI	Global Reporting Index
GTF	Global Task Force
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HSSE	Health & Safety and Social & Environmental
IAIG	Internal Audit and Investigation Group
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICF	Internal Control Framework
IPAS	Integrated Practice Advice and Support
IPMG	Infrastructure and Project Management Group
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCR	Latin America and the Caribbean Region
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MI	Micro-indicator
MO	Multilateral Organisation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MR	Middle East Region
MTR	Midterm Review
N/A	Not Applicable
N/E	No evidence
NPP	National Public Partner
NYSC	New York Service Cluster
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
OI	Organisational Instruction
PEAT	Procurement Efficiency assessment Tool
PMM	Project Management Manual
QBR	Quarterly Business Review
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBM	Results-Based Management
S3i	UNOPS Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments Initiative
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SH	Sexual Harassment
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SP	Strategic Plan
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNOBA	United Nations Board of Auditors
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan

UNOPS: PERFOMANCE AT-A-GLANCE

UNOPS Performance at-a-glance

The 2020 MOPAN assessment of UNOPS is the first of this organisation. The assessment covers the period 2017-2020.

UNOPS is unique in the UN system in many ways, in particular through its non-programmatic, self-financed business model and its mandate to be a central resource in the UN system for procurement and infrastructure, including for relevant capacity development activities. As a service provider UNOPS implements projects on behalf of others, supporting partners' efforts and goals.

Focusing on the value it provides to partners, UNOPS articulates its 'value proposition' through three contribution goals and four management goals. UNOPS has developed strong metrics and business intelligence to monitor demand for delivery of its services.

Effectiveness of delivery in UNOPS is supported by application of systematic management approaches and UNOPS is certified and regularly assessed and accredited by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). This has contributed to a perception, internally and by partners, that UNOPS adopts a business model that combines UN values and private sector characteristics.

UNOPS' business model is demand driven and firmly project-based and not linked to a programmatic mandate. This enables UNOPS to work with a variety of partners in many sectors and countries, including in some of the world's most challenging contexts.

Working for a fee, UNOPS does not receive any assessed or voluntary contributions. Because of its demand driven and self-financing business model, UNOPS, more than any other UN agency, needs to prove its value and effectiveness, and demonstrate its comparative and collaborative advantages, which it does based on detailed analysis of context, partner agencies and alternative providers of services.

UNOPS derives a number of advantages and strengths from its unique business model. However, whilst they contribute to its performance, these also present some inherent trade-offs that UNOPS has to consider.

***UNOPS' key strengths* are:**

- UNOPS is defined by a culture of innovation and a solutions-focussed approach, providing a solid foundation for further growth, consistent with its strategic direction.
- Managing and mitigating risk is fundamental for UNOPS; to manage such risks UNOPS has built robust enterprise risk management and internal control frameworks, aligned to an overarching governance, risk, and compliance framework.
- UNOPS is not constrained by a programmatic mandate, nor by earmarked funding; it thus, has the possibility to engage where it has strong comparative or collaborative advantage.
- The demand driven organisational structure and operating model gives UNOPS agility, flexibility, and responsiveness; UNOPS is able to rapidly resize and reorient organisational structures including its geographical footprint. This was evident for example in the efforts and initiatives that UNOPS has undertaken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Decentralised decision-making and the application of systematic management practices and recognised international standards have contributed to UNOPS' reputation for excellence in project implementation. This is an area of permanent focus and one of the pillars for its growth ambitions, together with the continuous adaptation of the type and scope of services provided.

The assessment also points to ***challenges and areas of trade off***. As UNOPS is engaging in a new strategic cycle, these deserve particular attention:

- Its non-programmatic, cross-cutting operational mandate provides a large degree of flexibility but also implies a dependence on generating business in a way no other UN organisation has. This can be a challenge and carries several risks (for example financial risk of not meeting net-revenue targets, or operational risk from certain types of projects). Its wide scope for engagement also obliges UNOPS to be critically conscious of how it selects and prioritises projects and partners, to remain consistent with its Strategic Plan and its UN mandate and commitments.

- The lean and flexible structure, with physical country presence contingent on demand for its services, is one of UNOPS' strengths. However, it also presents some degree of trade-off with continuity and ability to engage systematically, for example, in UN Country Teams, or to develop and engage in new partnerships.

The assessment also notes a number of areas where it is considered there is **room for improvement or consideration** for UNOPS in terms of better transparency, clarity, or accountability:

- A fundamental aspect of business excellence (the EFQM[1] model) is continuous learning and improvement, and the integration of feedback loops and sharing of lessons learnt is a welcome area where UNOPS has announced its intention to intensify efforts.

- Development results in UNOPS are formally reported in output terms. UNOPS has announced an intention to better track "direct and indirect contributions", and a better consistency in the usage of definitions between UNOPS results terminology and that applied by peers and partners would help clarify the nature and scope of these contributions.

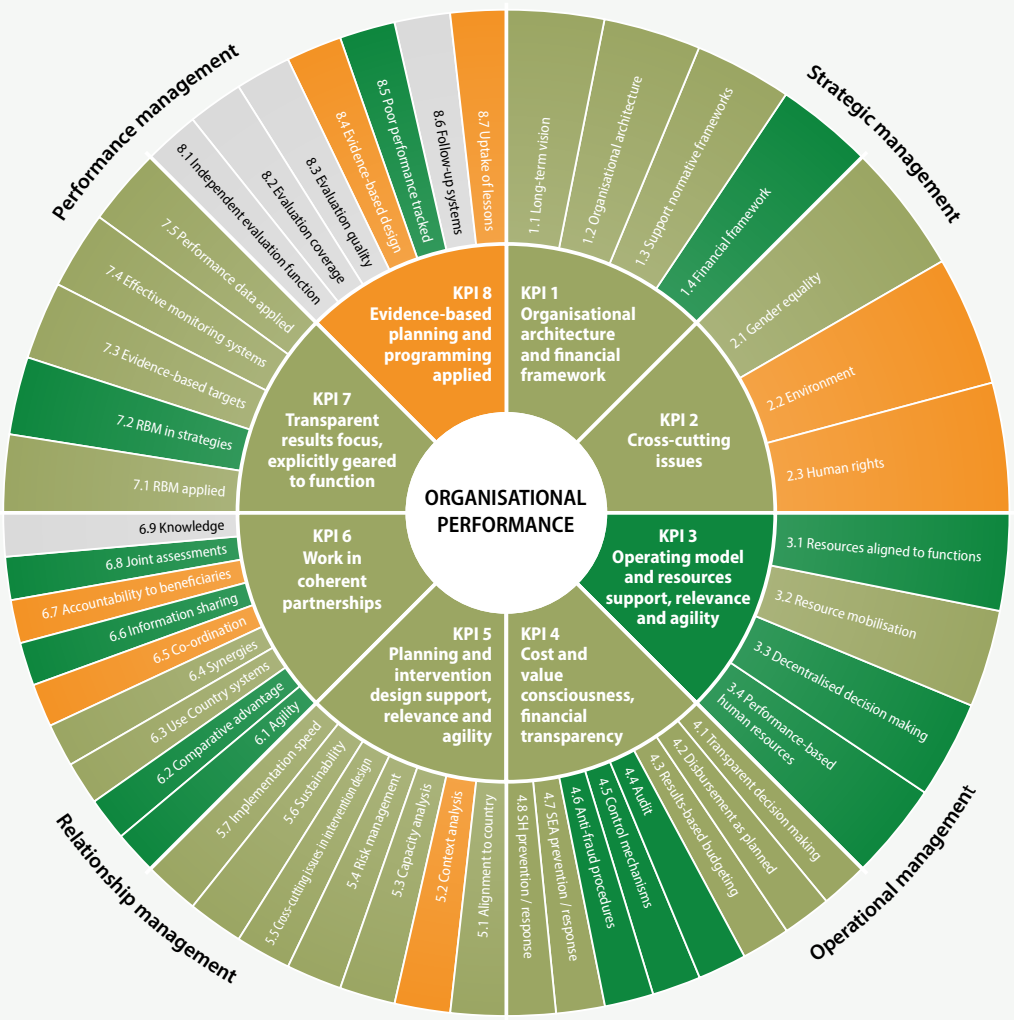
- Given its commitment to UN values and global commitments such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reporting on and integrating concerns related to gender mainstreaming, environment, and human rights is emerging as an area for improvement.

- Whilst UNOPS knowledge management system is maturing and improving, two issues are signalled for further consideration: i) the balance between attention to systems for sharing of lessons from implementation versus systems for data analytics by demand, especially given the ambition to evolve the service lines and solutions offered which need to be informed by lessons learnt, and ii) introducing a certain degree of post project assessment work on the contribution of the outputs to the partner's broader objectives would strengthen the credibility of the self-reported results and by implication the accountability to stakeholders.

1 European Foundation for Quality Management

Looking ahead at UNOPS' future trajectory, demand for its services is strong and so is its delivery capacity, as evidenced by the excellent performance in operational management described in Figure 1. With a number of new initiatives, UNOPS is broadening both the size and depth of its engagements, working increasingly as a strategic implementing partner and through early engagement with partners higher up in the decision-making process opening up for new opportunities. UNOPS will need to closely monitor whether this growth is fully aligned with its strategic plan and financial viability and robustness. As is evident from the assessment in Figure 1, UNOPS overall has a clear and robust architecture and financial framework to help guide its future grow path. Ongoing improvement in the evidence-based nature of its management practices for example in the form of better clarity on the value it adds in these new markets, and how it addresses cross-cutting issues in its projects, bolstered by metrics and evaluative evidence or reviews of results and lessons learnt, would further strengthen this. Likewise, building further on the virtual engagements at country level that has been a result of the COVID-19 pandemic should strengthen UNOPS collaborative engagement with development partners; engagement in UN country teams, and generally in UNDS reform. With this in place, UNOPS could be in a strong position to further flex and evolve its service lines to meet ever changing demand and maintain its quite unique position in the development architecture.

FIGURE 1: UNOPS' PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY



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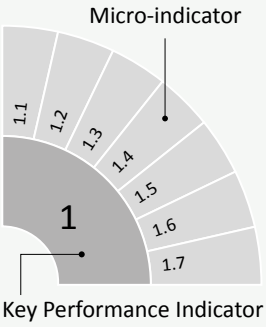


- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

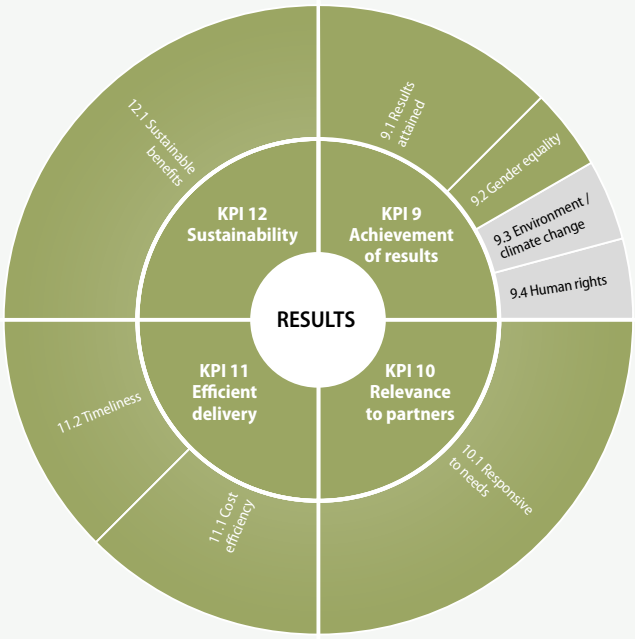
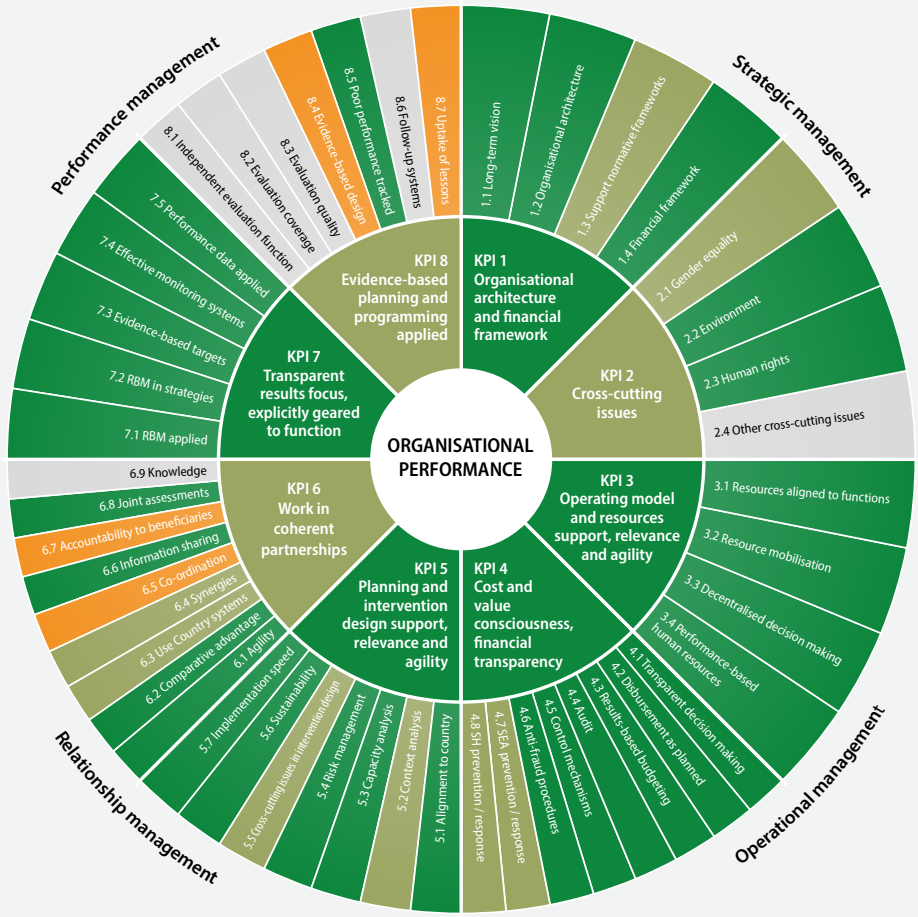


FIGURE 2: UNOPS' PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY (previous rating scale)

Changes to MOPAN's rating system

MOPAN's methodology is continuously evolving, and a recent notable change is how ratings (and their corresponding colours) are applied based on the scores at MI and KPI levels. Compared to the pre-2019 rating scale, applied in Figure 1, the threshold for a rating has been raised to reflect the increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring are unaffected.



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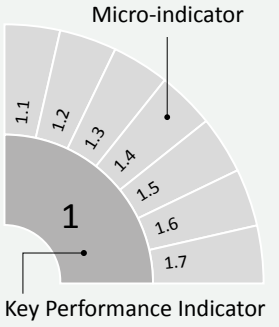

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- **Unsatisfactory** (1.01-2.00)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.00)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

MOPAN AND UNOPS TERMINOLOGY

The UNOPS-MOPAN "glossary" in Table 1 (overleaf) presents some concepts and terminology to help readers better see the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) through the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) lens. A detailed explanation of how the MOPAN framework has been adjusted to capture UNOPS' specificity is provided in section 4.

Within the MOPAN methodology, programme-based organisations are assumed to have *country or regional strategies* at the core of their planning. The equivalent for UNOPS, being self-financed and dependent on developing a portfolio of projects, is to operate with *country and regional business plans*. These are central to the strategic planning process.

MOPAN considers how a Multilateral Organisation (MO) *disburses* funds for a project as a proxy indication of the speed and effectiveness with which an MO implements projects. As UNOPS implements projects on behalf of partners, it uses the term *delivery* rather than disbursement. Delivery or delivery volume is defined by UNOPS as project expenditure, excluding fees.[2]

Where the MOPAN framework generally refers to *interventions*, because UNOPS is project-based, the equivalent term is *projects*.

The MOPAN methodology generally assumes that MOs conduct annual *programming* exercises to decide on allocation of resources. UNOPS, as a service provider, manages *engagement* and portfolios of projects which form the basis for the budgeting process.

Likewise, the MOPAN methodology assumes that most MOs are dependent on resources from donors and thus are geared to mobilising such resources. UNOPS, however, is self-financed and receives funds only through agreeing to specific engagements and projects with partners who then pay for UNOPS services. A comparable element to *resource mobilisation* to assess for UNOPS is *business development* – its engagement with partners - as this is the backbone that generates resources.

The MOPAN methodology uses 'staff' to refer to individuals who work for the MO, regardless of contract type. As *staff* is a specific contract type within UNOPS, the general term *personnel* is used instead. Personnel positions may be of two types: (a) staff member posts under the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules; and, (b) any other position, such as Individual Contractor Agreements, Internship Agreements, and Volunteer Agreements.[3]

Table 1: Glossary of terms

MOPAN terminology		UNOPS terminology
Country/regional strategies	–	Country/regional business plans
Disbursement	–	Delivery (project expenditure excl. fee)
Intervention	–	Project implemented on behalf of a partner
Programming	–	Engagement
Resource mobilisation	–	Business development
Staff	–	Personnel

2 UNOPS management results and budget framework 2015 (DP/OPS/2015/5), Annex II. Terminology

3 Operational Instruction, Personnel Management Framework, 2017, p5

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

1.1. INTRODUCING UNOPS

In its own words, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is "focused on helping to improve people's lives in a practical sense – supporting partners' efforts to bring peace and security, humanitarian and development solutions to some of the world's most challenging environments."[4]

UNOPS commenced operations as a separate and identifiable entity in 1995 and is today classified as an 'other entity'[5], and a fully-fledged member of the United Nations Development System (UNDS). UNOPS' mandate, funding, and *modus operandi* have evolved since its establishment,[6] and set it apart from other members of the UNDS. Its mission and mandate, governance arrangements, organisational structure, and financing are outlined in this section. Special emphasis is put of the following characteristics: UNOPS is a service provider – a central resource in the United Nations (UN) system for procurement and infrastructure – it is non-programmatic and project-based, and is demand driven and self-financed. The main implications of these characteristics that distinguish UNOPS from other UN agencies are described below.

Mission and mandate

UNOPS operates under the stated mission: "to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development."[7] UNOPS' mandate is as a service provider.

Box 1: UNOPS' mission and mandate

"We are focused on implementation, committed to UN values and private sector efficiency, and are the only part of the UN not receiving core funding from taxpayers. Our services cover infrastructure, project management, procurement, financial management and human resources. Our partners call on us to supplement their own capacities, improve speed, reduce risks, boost cost-effectiveness and increase quality."[8]

The 2018-2021 Strategic Plan further elaborates this stating that UNOPS' focus is on "implementation for impact" and sets out that UNOPS' ambition is "to become a known and recognised resource providing collaborative advantages that expand implementation capacity for Governments, the United Nations, and other partners, in support of the Secretary-General and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."[9] This is key to understanding the nature of UNOPS' operations and its service provider mandate: it implements and supports projects on behalf of other entities and aims to do this as efficiently and effectively as possible. UNOPS, thus, does not have projects or programmes of its own, but responds to demand from partners and, being self-financed, is dependent on such demand for its continued viability.

UNOPS has two different types of goals. Three ***contribution goals*** express the overall value proposition for UNOPS' services:

1. **Enable partners** to do more with less through efficient management support services, delivered locally or as global shared services;

4 https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/unops-marks-25-years-of-supporting-sustainable-development

5 Rather than fund, programme or specialised agency

6 The legislative basis for UNOPS has been firmly established through a number of resolutions and decisions, including General Assembly resolution 65/176, and Executive Board decisions 2009/25, 2010/21, 2013/23, 2015/12, 2016/12, 2016/19 and 2017/16.

7 The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p8

8 https://www.unops.org/about

9 The UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021, p1

2. **Help people** achieve individual, local, national and global objectives, through effective specialised technical expertise grounded in international norms and standards; and

3. **Support countries** in expanding the pool and effect of resources available to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

In addition, four ***management goals***, associated with UNOPS' excellence agenda, guide its internal management reform and innovation agenda. The management goals form the core of UNOPS' 'balanced scorecard' management tool:

1. **Partner value:** Deliver innovative services and solutions contributing value recognised by partners and in accordance with international standards and recognised best practice;

2. **People excellence:** Empower people to perform at consistently high standards in a culture conducive to principled performance, making UNOPS an employer of choice, attracting and retaining a talented workforce;

3. **Process excellence:** Drive measurable improvement of quality, efficiency and reliability of operations through simplification and innovation of processes, based on clear standards and delegated authority enabled through information technology; and

4. **Financial stewardship:** Safeguard the demand driven, self-financed business model and ability to invest in innovation for the benefit of governments, the United Nations and other partners, and the people they serve.

Results in UNOPS can thus be considered at two levels, the operational results linked to the contribution goals and the organisational results linked to the management goals.

For its contribution goals, and in contrast to many other UN entities, UNOPS' reports its results in terms of outputs delivered rather than development outcomes achieved. UNOPS explains this by reference to its mandate: as a service provider UNOPS delivers its development results through partners who are ultimately accountable for outcomes and impact, whereas UNOPS is accountable for outputs, as these can be attributed directly to UNOPS. UNOPS' results-based reporting approach was agreed in the context of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017[10] and confirmed as follows in the 2020 annual report of the Executive Director:

Box 2: Basis for UNOPS' results measurement and reporting

"UNOPS approach to results-based management, including its role in the results chain, is described in Annex II of the UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (DP/OPS/2017/5-Annexes). Noting that UNOPS contributes to programme outcomes in partnership with other entities, achievements in the Annual report are measured and reported at the output level."[11]

UNOPS reports on performance against its contribution goals, balanced scorecard, and on output delivered, in the annual report of the Executive Director. This report is prepared to Global Reporting Initiative standards, with the Global Reporting Index (GRI) Content Index provided as an annex.

10 UNOPS results methodology, Annex IV to the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 (DP/OPS/2013/3- Annexes)

11 Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, Annex II, Results-based reporting, p1

UNOPS also reported in its Mid-Term Review of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan[12] the correlation between UNOPS engagement and activity and global development issues: a measure of relevance and potential contribution to changes in people's lives. UNOPS intends, according to the latest strategic plan, to provide more granular results information, to provide a differentiated account, increasing the transparency of the value it contributes to different parts of the 'overall value chain.' In communicating the value it adds, UNOPS also has a stated ambition to more clearly delineate between 'indirect' and 'direct' contributions to partners' implementation capacity, as per Box 3, below.[13]

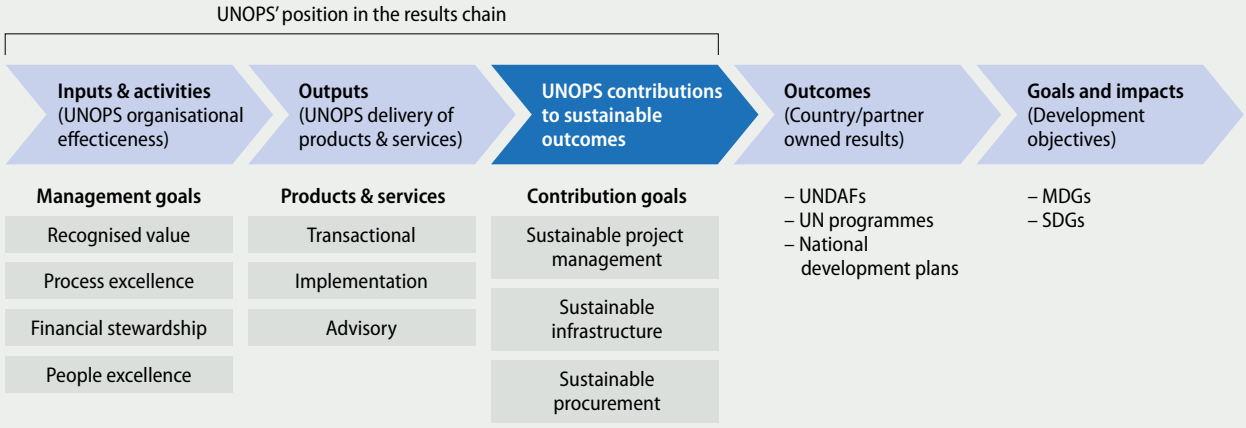
Box 3: UNOPS' position in the results chain

Contributions to sustainable outcomes

UNOPS sees itself as delivering **contributions to sustainable outcomes**, measured by "what UNOPS leaves behind once the project has been handed over."[14] UNOPS contributes to partners' outcomes through its products and services, which are delivered based on partner demand[15]. "By producing project outputs, UNOPS projects contribute directly to various outcomes and indirectly to impacts at various levels of the results chain of an operational context[16]

- "**Outputs** are the products and services of the three UNOPS delivery practices and are defined as the products and services delivered through transactional, implementation or advisory services."[17]
- "**Outcomes** are the country- and partner-owned results to which UNOPS contributes and is defined as the short- and medium-term effects of the outputs of an intervention."[18]
- UNOPS defines impact as "Positive and negative long-term effects on identifiable population produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended."[19]

Results chain



UNOPS Strategic Plan 2014-17, Annex IV, p24.

12 Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, 2020, pp.6-7.
13 The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021.
14 UNOPS Strategic Plan 2014-17, Annex IV, p28.
15 *Ibid*, p.23.
16 Project Management Manual, Pt. I, p74
17 UNOPS Strategic Plan 2014-17, Annex IV, p23.
18 *Ibid*, p22.
19 *Ibid*, p28.

UNOPS' reporting of output is facilitated by the introduction of a supportive IT structure: oneUNOPS Projects, within which project managers are required to plan and report on completed outputs (but not outcomes or impacts), with project expenses attributed in accordance with output-based budgeting.

At the core of measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of UNOPS delivery are UNOPS' management goals which are reported through a management results framework reflecting UNOPS' balanced scorecard of 47 performance indicators and targets aimed at measuring and reporting on performance and achievements for the biennium under the four categories: partners, people, process, and finance. Each management goal is underpinned by three drivers,[20] operationalised through 56 initiatives, set out in the Strategic Plan.[21] For 2019, an overview of the results against performance indicators, compared to a baseline of 2017, is presented in the annex to the annual report of the Executive Director and also reported as part of the budget estimates for the biennium 2018-2019.

Governance arrangements

In 2010 UNOPS was formally included in the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The Board consists of thirty-six member states elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), who provide intergovernmental support and supervision[22] to UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS. The current Executive Director was appointed in 2014 and a new, reduced and streamlined leadership team was introduced in 2019.

In early 2016, the UNOPS Executive Director was also formally admitted as a full and equal member of the Chief Executives Board, and now reports to both the Secretary-General and the Executive Board.

UNOPS governance arrangements are well documented and clearly set out.[23] The arrangements are based on UNOPS' Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) framework's stated *principled performance approach*, to help the organisation reliably achieve its objectives, address uncertainty, and act with integrity. Four overarching organisational principles are applied[24], with the governance model organised around five 'blocks' to ensure duties and powers are transparently segregated at all levels of the organisation: (i) External Oversight; (ii) Executive Office Oversight; (iii) Operations Management; (iv) Risk, Compliance and Financial Controllership; and (v) Assurance.

External governance is established through Member States' resolutions and decisions, including accountability to the Secretary-General.

Internal governance concerns the totality of rules, processes and practices that direct and control UNOPS, involving the interplay of organisational culture, structure and policy: how decisions are made, performance ensured, risks managed, and compliance assured at all levels of the organisation. UNOPS has reviewed its internal governance structure and strengthened its risk management for acceptance and assurance of projects. To simplify and empower

20 The drivers of partner value are: (a) manage partner value; (b) partner for knowledge and effect; and (c) communicate contribution of value. The drivers of people excellence are: (a) embrace a culture founded in United Nations values and principles; (b) attract, recognise and develop talent; and (c) reinforce leadership. The drivers of process excellence are: (a) manage efficiency and consistency; (b) benchmark performance; and (c) innovate services and delivery platform. The drivers for financial stewardship are: (a) manage growth and delivery; (b) attribute costs to value; and (c) invest in knowledge and innovation.

21 The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, Annex III.

22 https://www.unops.org/about/governance/executive-board

23 Organisational Principles and Governance Model, Executive Office Directive, Ref. EOD.ED.2017.02

24 Organisational Principles: i) The oversight, management, controllership and assurance of UNOPS activities shall be segregated to prevent the risk of conflicts, errors and fraud and to ensure the efficiency and quality of such activities; ii) Authority shall be delegated to the most appropriate level and shall come with accountability; iii) UNOPS activities shall be managed by exception, that is, that issues and opportunities shall be managed and elevated and/or reported through UNOPS management in accordance with UNOPS framework, in particular UNOPS delegation of authority framework, and/or as may be required; iv) UNOPS activities shall be carried out on the basis of risk-informed decisions, with risks being re-assessed continuously throughout the implementation of UNOPS activities and in line with UNOPS risk appetite at the operational and global levels.

its operations, it is adjusting its internal structures and reducing the number and volume of internal policies, whilst ensuring that its processes are aligned and supported by readily available, up-to-date guidance.[25]

UNOPS has three main forums for institutional co-ordination: (a) the Senior Leadership Team, which meets bi-weekly, to advise on short-term operational and strategic issues; (b) the Corporate Operations Group, which meets monthly, to advise on strategic issues for the medium and longer-term; and (c) a larger global leadership meeting that is convened annually to develop collective means to operationalise medium- and longer-term strategic priorities.

Organisational structure

Where many UN agencies and Multilateral Development Banks are organised around a matrix structure, UNOPS is structured according to two organisational entity types: functional and geographic. Figure 3 on page XX shows UNOPS' organisational chart, with functional entities shown in blue and geographic in green. The Senior Leadership Team has seven members, including the Executive Director, and six senior directors with responsibilities for core areas of UNOPS activities.[26] The Director of Regional Portfolios holds responsibility for Regional and Country level engagement and partnerships.

From a **functional** perspective, UNOPS' organisational structure is developed to support its business development and service delivery to partners through various dedicated Headquarter-level (HQ) units, organised in four business clusters. A global shared services centre facilitates the provision of internal support services (on a cost-recovery basis) to the entities comprising the geographic functions and otherwise.[27]

Regarding **geographic** functions, UNOPS has refined its global organisational structure in recent years with global portfolio of projects organised in geographical regions that manage country and multi-country offices, and country or local project offices. All global projects are organised in service clusters embedded within one structure.

Because of its demand driven model, unlike many other multilateral organisations (MOs) who generally have a stable country and regional presence, the scope and location of UNOPS' geographic presence is dynamic and expands and contracts with the demand for its services. Thus, UNOPS only has a country or regional presence where it has projects, and once projects close and the size and scope of the portfolio diminishes, the size and scope of the country presence is aligned and resized, based on a set of transparent criteria. As a result, UNOPS country presence in a particular country may be significant for a period of time, but then diminish or disappear when projects close.

Finances and operations

UNOPS' business model is that of a demand driven and self-financed UN organisation: rather than receiving assessed contributions, it provides services in exchange for a fee. As a project-based organisation and in the absence of regular contributions, the UNOPS governance structure and management activities needed to support the achievement of its strategic goals are funded through fees recovered as revenue from project services provided to UNOPS' partners. UNOPS is thus, entirely self-financed[28] and UNOPS' business model is fee-based for delivery of services in response to demand.

UNOPS operates on a full cost-recovery model, (Figure 4) where each project covers all costs incurred. Some costs are charged as absolute amounts and others as a percentage of project costs. Figure 4 presents both the expenditure and the revenue side of a UNOPS project; the costs in Figure 4 identified as client project related expenditures are

25 UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021, para. 97.

26 These are the Director of Implementation Practices and Standards, the CFO and Director of Administration, the Director of Regional Portfolios, General Council, the Director of Communications, and the Chief Executive of the UNOPS Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment Initiative (S3i).

27 The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Annexes.

28 UNOPS Net Assets, 2020

Box 4: Financial definitions[29]

UNOPS applies the following definitions (see also Figure 4):

Direct costs are defined as costs incurred for the benefit of a particular project or client(s). Such costs are readily identifiable as having direct benefit for a particular project or client(s) and can be clearly documented. Direct costs are not covered by the management fee.

Indirect costs are incurred by the management and administration of the organisation in furtherance of UNOPS activities and policies. Such costs are charged to projects through a management fee specified in the project agreement.

Management fee is the sum payable to UNOPS in addition to direct costs for the implementation of an engagement.[30]

equivalent to "delivery", (see glossary: delivery is equivalent to project expenditure excluding fees). Demand, on the other hand, is equivalent to the resources generated through cost recovery (delivery plus management fee).

The management fee, which currently averages 4.4%,[31] covers UNOPS indirect costs, including those associated with the development, negotiation, conclusion, and implementation of the engagement agreement. The management fee is decided based on a pricing calculation, which takes account of a number of cost drivers including risk and varies from project to project.[32]

Financial regulations stipulate that the budget shall cover anticipated revenue and intended costs, and as a result UNOPS plans for a net revenue target of zero or higher every year. UNOPS does not have the possibility of accessing credit or reallocating funds between projects; it must act within the boundaries of its contractual obligations as a project service provider.

Because UNOPS is demand driven and not programmatic, it does not programme or mobilise resources quite as other MOs do. It does however, through its business development, engage with a variety of partners to identity and develop opportunities for working together, much as multilateral peers would do through resource mobilisation efforts. Furthermore, through the engagement acceptance process, it prioritises and drives the focus of its activities aligned to its strategic plan and consistent with the Chief Executives Board principles for collaboration, much as its peers do through their programming processes.

Demand for UNOPS services and solutions comes from a wide array of partners and continues to evolve over time. A decade ago, in 2010-2012, just under half (47%) of UNOPS services was to UN agencies and 43% to governments. By 2020 however, demand from UN agencies (excluding the World Bank, which is categorised as "other") had fallen to 27% against 14% from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) partners and 20% from non-OECD/DAC countries. The largest share – 40 % – was for "Other partners" which included the World Bank and the EU *inter alia*.[33] Among UN agencies, the UN Secretariat and UNHCR have remained priority partners over the last biennium and among other agencies World Bank and GFATM have been stable and significant partners. Among OECD countries, United Kingdom and United States have been the most

29 UNOPS management results and budget framework 2015, Annex II. Terminology

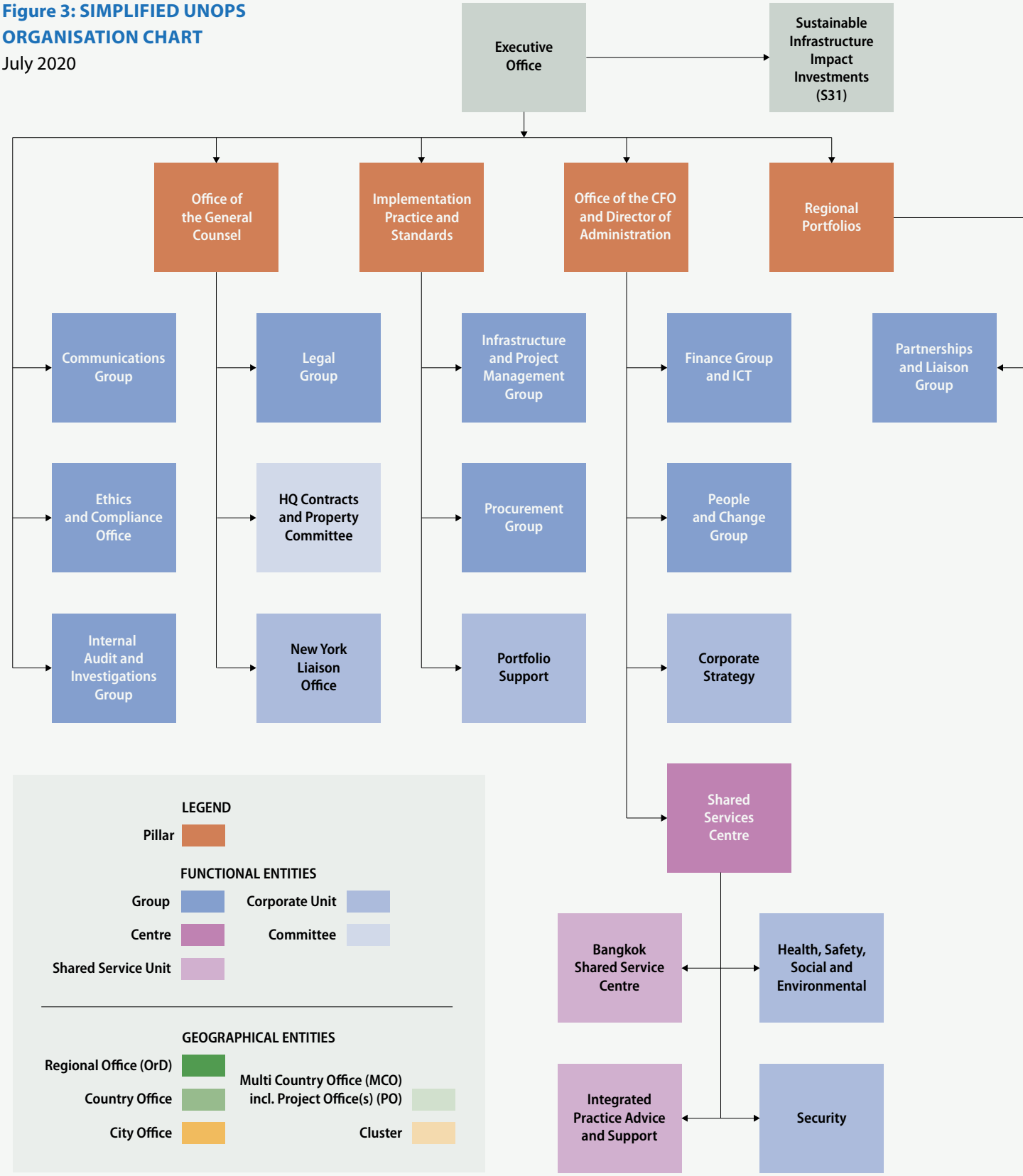
30 OD Value Proposition and Cost Recovery Model, 2018

31 Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements

32 The management fee (currently 4.4%) is externally benchmarked at 8%.

33 Quarterly Business Review, 2020 Q2. Preliminary financial performance data as of 06 Jul 2020

Figure 3: SIMPLIFIED UNOPS ORGANISATION CHART
July 2020



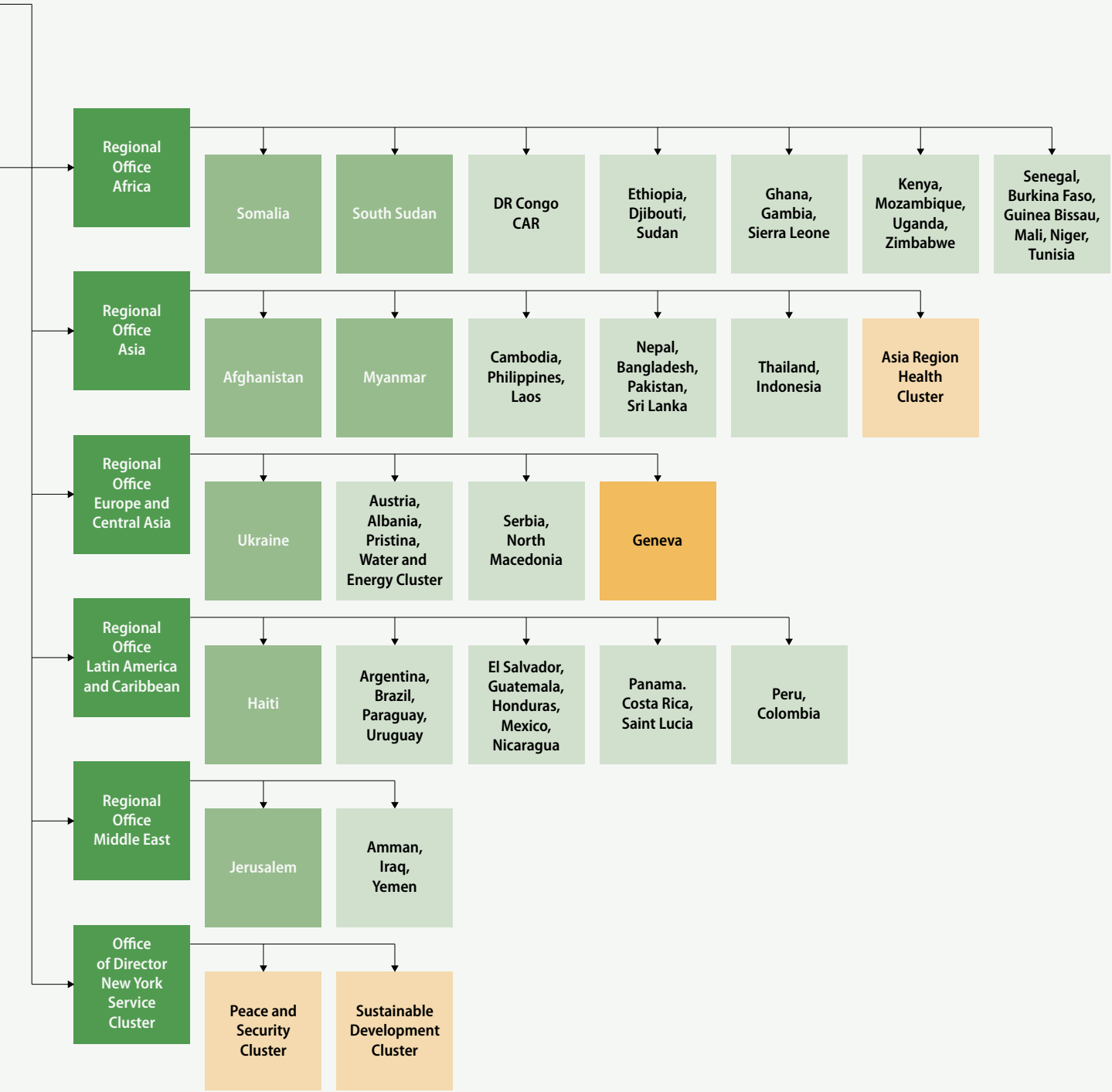

Regional Office Africa
Somalia
South Sudan
DR Congo CAR
Ethiopia, Djibouti, Sudan
Ghana, Gambia, Sierra Leone
Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda, Zimbabwe
Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Tunisia
Regional Office Asia
Afghanistan
Myanmar
Cambodia, Philippines, Laos
Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
Thailand, Indonesia
Asia Region Health Cluster
Regional Office Europe and Central Asia
Ukraine
Austria, Albania, Pristina, Water and Energy Cluster
Serbia, North Macedonia
Geneva
Regional Office Latin America and Caribbean
Haiti
Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay
El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua
Panama. Costa Rica, Saint Lucia
Peru, Colombia
Regional Office Middle East
Jerusalem
Amman, Iraq, Yemen
Office of Director New York Service Cluster
Peace and Security Cluster
Sustainable Development Cluster

Figure 4: UNOPS' COST RECOVERY MODEL[34]

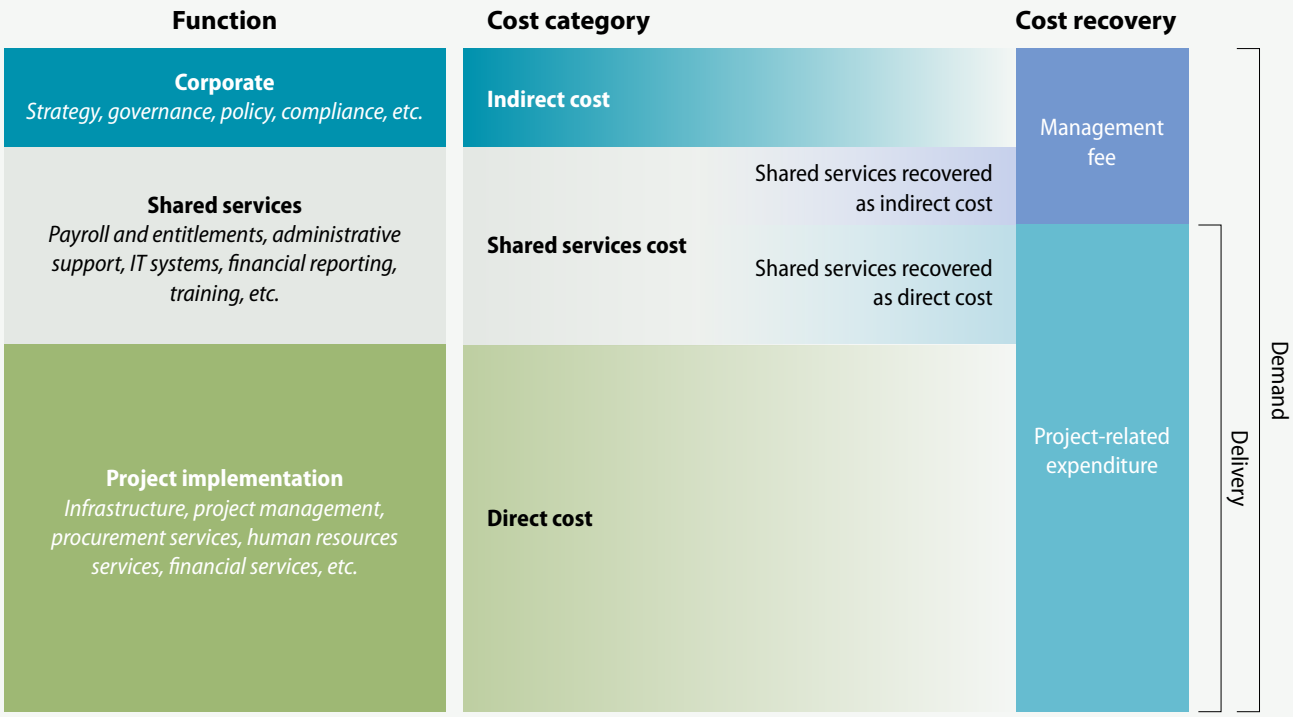
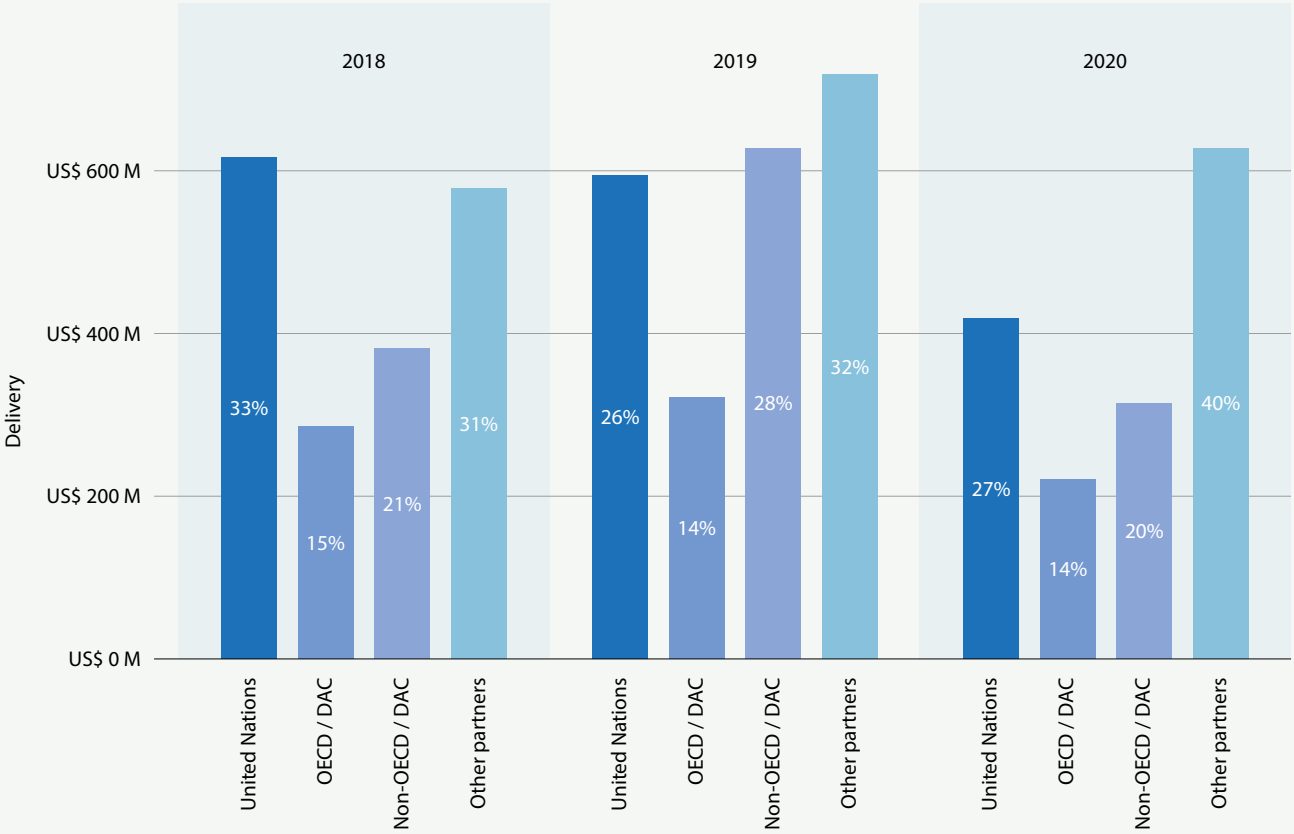


Figure 5: DELIVERY BY TYPE OF PARTNER, 2018-2020



34 Adapted from: JIU, Review of management and administration in the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); 2018

significant partners, and three Latin American countries topped the non-OECD list, namely Mexico, Guatemala and Argentina. Because of UNOPS' project-based business model and the large size of some projects, annual variation can sometimes be explained by the delivery of a single new, major project.

In 2018-2019, UNOPS delivered solutions and services worth USD 2.3 billion across over 80 countries,[35] with 57% of delivery in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states, and other countries in fragile situations. Annual UNOPS activity level in countries in fragile situations also exceeded USD 1 billion for the first time in 2019. In parallel, UNOPS saw a doubling of demand for services and technical expertise in middle-income countries.[36]

From UNOPS troubled financial past, facing insolvency during the early 2000s, its finances are now significantly improved, and through "strengthened internal controls and a more conservative risk management approach"[37] it has built net assets in excess of USD 250 million. To safeguard its unique business model, UNOPS relies on its low operational surplus margin and net finance income – the main building blocks of its net assets – to ensure its financial viability. Level of reserves and net assets are thus key issues given the organisations' risk profile and are closely monitored by the Executive Board. UNOPS recently commissioned a desk review of net assets and reserves of sister UN agencies and there is an ongoing discussion with the Executive Board to review the minimum operational reserve formula established by the Executive Board in 2013. The minimum operational reserve was USD 21 million as of end 2019[38], and it was estimated that for the biennium 2020-2021, the opening and closing balances of the operational reserve would amount to USD 192.9 million[39].

In addition to its core portfolio, UNOPS is currently piloting an impact investment initiative, S3I,[40] whereby it will invest a proportion of its funding reserves into sustainable infrastructure projects in developing and emerging economies, with a reinvestment of returns through the S3I. The initiative is operational on a pilot basis and the financial implications of investing funding reserves are monitored closely by the Executive Board.

Box 5: S3i: Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments

The objective of the S3I programme is to develop a progressive network of knowledge-sharing platforms by forging new partnerships and by establishing Global Innovation Centres, benefiting countries and people in need.

Through this pilot initiative, funded from UNOPS own funds, UNOPS plays the role of both investor and service provider. The initiative has been established in recognition of UNOPS expertise and the global need for infrastructure investments, and the social, environmental and financial impact such infrastructure can have. Any revenue generated through this initiative will be reinvested into future projects.[41]

In 2018, UNOPS made its first investment under the social impact investment initiative to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. By May 2019, UNOPS had deployed USD 38.8 million of its reserves to 'S3I' projects, mainly as investments in infrastructure for renewable energy and affordable housing, and had committed a further USD 20 million).[42]

35 Only by bringing everyone to the table can we address everyone's needs, 2019

36 Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

37 UNOPS Net Assets, 2020

38 UNOPS Net Assets, 2020

39 United Nations Office for Project Services budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021

40 https://www.unops.org/about/investing-for-impact

41 S3i Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments. https://content.unops.org/publications/S3I-booklet_EN.pdf?mtime=20201127102957

42 United Nations Office for Project Services budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019

UNOPS' has developed specific expertise and services in five "service lines": infrastructure, procurement, project management, human resources, financial management, and other management services. Services and solutions proposed are flexible and modular; they can be deployed as self-standing or integrated service offerings. Table 2 shows the balance of delivery (defined as project expenditure excluding fees), between each of the service lines in the calendar years 2019 and 2018.[43]

Table 2: Balance of delivery between UNOPS' service lines, 2018-19

Service line	Percentage of total delivery 2019	Percentage of total delivery 2018
Infrastructure	17	17
Procurement	38	35
Project management	11	4
Human resources	12	16
Financial management	24	27

Services provided under these lines can be further categorised into three service types:

a) **Transactional services** are generic support services often pertaining to activities related to human resources, procurement and financial management, whether produced and delivered locally, as global shared services or through secretariat services for international initiatives.

b) **Advisory services** comprise the provision of specialised expertise to partners in conducting their operations and projects.

c) **Implementation services** comprise project management on behalf of partners designed in response to their needs in pursuit of benefits in the form of an expected output. They include design, construction, contract management of physical infrastructure, civil works, etc. Implementation services often involve a blend of transactional and advisory services tailored to partner needs and the context.

Within the demand driven implementation mandate, the Strategic Plan underlines that UNOPS can make direct and indirect contributions towards achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), depending on demand, but note that goals 9 and 17 are the areas showing the highest demand for its services.

Measures used by UNOPS to focus its engagement and collaboration at the country level may include development of country partnership plans to:

- Align UNOPS in-country activities behind national needs, priorities and plans, considering the priorities of donors and international financial institutions;
- Target the operationalisation and resourcing of the UNOPS in-country value proposition towards areas and approaches where expansion of implementation capacity can have the greatest impact; and
- Serve as a platform for engagement and collaboration with other in-country stakeholders, including United Nations system partners and the private sector.

43 Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p.4 and Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, p.4

Being non-programmatic, UNOPS does not have a single area of thematic expertise. Rather, the competencies of UNOPS' personnel mirror its mandate and service lines. Given UNOPS' service lines, it has two main categories of personnel, UNOPS personnel and partner personnel administered by UNOPS, primarily under the service line "human resources." Partner personnel on UNOPS contracts amounted to 7 763 individuals as of 31 December 2019[44], significantly more than UNOPS personnel who amounted to 4765 on 31 December 2019, and 4 879 by end of Q2 in 2020.[45]

1.2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Organisational and governance reforms have accompanied the evolution of UNOPS since its establishment in the mid-nineties. A major restructuring exercise from 2006 onwards intending to increase efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness saw the strengthening of financial and management controls, *inter alia*. These reforms were recognised by the General Assembly and have confirmed UNOPS' role as a central resource in the UN system.[46] December 2010 marked the final major milestone in the journey of UNOPS to its current guise, with the formal inclusion of UNOPS in the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA.[47]

Upon taking up her position in 2014, the current Executive Director introduced further reforms. Over the MOPAN assessment period of 2017-2020, UNOPS has implemented multiple new improvements and change initiatives, whilst also deepening existing ones. Of these, the following key reforms are highlighted, as particularly significant and of importance for UNOPS' present performance and future trajectory:

- Deepening of the use of international standards of accreditation through application of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and PRINCE2 models and certification to ISO Management System standards.
- New UNOPS corporate structure, including new Senior Leadership Team
- Introduction of Implementation Standards Management Framework (2018-21)
- Development and implementation of Knowledge Management Strategy (2018)
- Upgrade of IT systems, including a shift to G-Suite and the development of a Treasury Management System
- The strengthening and digitising of its Enterprise Risk Management

With the ambition to simplify and empower its operations, UNOPS is adjusting its internal structures and reducing the quantity of internal policies, whilst ensuring that processes are aligned and supported by readily available, up-to-date, guidance. Indeed, within the first years of the tenure of the Executive Director, many of UNOPS' operating principles[48] have been revised, rewritten and consolidated in the Implementation Standards Management Framework (2018-21).[49] This process is supported by a continuous improvement in UNOPS' technology platforms, notably "oneUNOPS".[50]

44 Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020: Annex 1 GRI Content Index 2019

45 Quarterly Business Review, 2020 Q2. Preliminary financial performance data as of 06 Jul 2020

46 https://www.unops.org/about/governance/mandate-and-reforms

47 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2010

48 https://hbr.org/2019/05/the-executive-director-of-a-un-agency-on-running-it-like-a-business

49 https://www.unops.org/policies

50 The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

UNOPS has updated its Executive Board on progress in implementing UNDS reform on several occasions and participates at the working level in all Strategic Results Groups and most of the sub-task teams of the UN Sustainable Development Group. For example, UNOPS – by way of its business model and expertise in human resources – is well placed to engage and contribute effectively to the UN system-wide strategy on the future of work and the Future of the United Nations Workforce (see Box 7 for engagement in UNDS reform).

The effects that COVID-19 has had on the organisation, and implications for both its internal and external context, is addressed in Chapters 2 and 3.

1.3. PERFORMANCE JOURNEY

UNOPS has, in its 25-year lifetime, seen a large number of changes and been through financially and operationally challenging times. The challenges came to a head around 2006 when significant reforms were introduced in response to severe criticism from the UN Board of Auditors over a number of years and a financial crisis that had nearly depleted reserve and jeopardised the foundations of the organisation. Reforms were introduced with the backing of Member States, the HQ was moved from New York to Copenhagen and, in 2008, a Change Management Programme was introduced. Very much in a private sector spirit, UNOPS initiated its excellence journey and by June 2011 were certified in quality management (ISO9001) and in 2013 formally adopted the 'EFQM[51] Model' for Excellence. Over the following years UNOPS clarified its business profile, decentralisation gave regional directors more authority and independence, and Global Management meetings helped build a corporate buy in of reforms and change.

This is the first time that UNOPS has been assessed by MOPAN, as such there are no previous MOPAN report findings to benchmark this assessment against. However, other assessments, both internal and external, have been conducted in recent years. Key issues raised by these are presented in Box 6.

51 EFQM (the European Foundation for Quality Management) – The EFQM Model is a globally recognised management framework that supports organisations in managing change and improving performance.

Box 6: Key issues raised in previous assessments

Key issues from the 2017 EFQM assessment

In 2017, UNOPS commissioned an external excellence assessment to take stock of its performance against the internationally recognised model for organisational excellence it adopted in 2013. In the assessment, UNOPS attained the 'EFQM Recognised for Excellence 5-star Award'.

Areas for attention as UNOPS strives to achieve next level of excellence include:

- Management of change and strategic improvements;
- strengthening brand and positioning based on a shared understanding of new elements of the value proposition, internally as well as externally;
- ensuring human resources strategies are developed to foster leadership styles and attract competences needed for the new ambitions of more strategic engagement and social impact investment; and
- investing in knowledge management.

Issues from the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System report 2018

A review conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) in 2018 Report then made three formal, and a number of informal, recommendations to UNOPS. Two of the formal recommendations are addressed to the Executive Board and relate to the Terms of Reference for the Audit Advisory Committee and to contingency provisions under the UNOPS budget with a view to ensure adequate operational reserves. These were also referred to at the 2020 UNOPS Executive Board meeting where the Board requested UNOPS to conduct a detailed study of its operational reserve and the formula for calculating the mandatory minimum reserve level. The other formal recommendation, addressed to the Executive Director, was to establish a full-time ethics officer position at senior level and provide additional resources in the 2019/2020 management budget to ensure a more proactive ethics function.

Issues from the Executive Board

At the May 2020 UNOPS Executive Board meeting three key issues were raised as follows:

- "Recalls decision 2019/15, paragraph 8, on the implementation of the 1% levy and decides to stay seized of the matter;
- Requests that UNOPS conduct a detailed study of its operational reserve and the formula for calculating the mandatory minimum reserve level;
- Requests that UNOPS, pursuant to review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, provide an oral update at the annual session 2021 and submit the outcome for consideration by the Executive Board at the earliest opportunity and no later than the first regular session 2022, with the ambition to present it at the second regular session 2021."

Sources: Decisions adopted at the annual session 2020; JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018; EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

Chapter 2

Findings, conclusions and outlook

2.1. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is different from other UN agencies in many ways. Classified in the United Nations (UN) system as an "other entity," not only do UNOPS' governance and legal status set it apart from programmatic UN bodies, but also its mandate, business and funding models are different, and result in certain trade-offs that UNOPS has to make. Capturing and assessing this has necessitated several adjustments to the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment framework, as elaborated in Section 4.

UNOPS is driven by its mandate and its business model, unique in the UN system. The combination of business model and operating context provides a strong incentive to ensure operational and organisational effectiveness. At the same time, the key characteristics of UNOPS result in a number of trade-offs and specific challenges highlighted in this assessment. The key tenets and challenges of UNOPS' performance are summarised below.

For the 2020 assessments, specific consideration is throughout also given to the organisation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its effect on UNOPS' mandate, mission, operations and activities.

In summary, UNOPS has responded effectively to implications posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has placed a renewed emphasis on prevention and resilience in the health care sector, worldwide. UNOPS has supported efforts in over 70 countries around the world to mitigate impact since the onset, through delivery of human resource services, emergency health procurement, rehabilitating hospitals/health centres and financing sustainable infrastructure[52]. This has ensured continued delivery of the core mandate through making UNOPS expertise as a service provider, technical provider and implementer of projects available to partners and governments. UNOPS has demonstrated operational flexibility through restructuring of operational activities as appropriate, setting up a Global Task Force (GTF) to provide "first line, dedicated support to business units in the implementation of new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, in order to maximise the impact that UNOPS can provide."[53] UNOPS' business and operating model, including the positioning of many national personnel at the country level, contributed to operations not being as profoundly affected as they could have been. In many cases, UNOPS continued work on the ground, whereas global travel restrictions would have jeopardised the contribution of international personnel.

Understanding demand and responding to needs

As a demand driven organisation, the foundation for UNOPS' operations is to understand its operational context, respond to demand for its services and solutions, and remain relevant by demonstrating its understanding of wider global issues and identifying where, how and why it can or should respond, i.e., the business opportunities it has to be aware of. At the same time, as a UN organisation, there is an obligation to meet demands in response to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), other global commitments, and to pressing global needs.

52 Report of the annual session 2020.

53 UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19, 2020.

Box 7: Implementation of UNDS reform

As a demand driven, self-financed organisation with a non-programmatic implementation mandate, UNOPS does not frame its activities and contributions to helping countries achieve the SDGs through country programmes. UNOPS supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) via implementation. UNOPS country representatives engage directly with other UN Country Team members for the purpose of supporting the respective programmatic priorities and implement activities in areas of comparative advantage.

UNOPS has made high level commitments to, and is participating actively in, the UNDS reform process. UNOPS has updated its Executive Board on progress in implementing UNDS reform on several occasions and participates at the working level in all Strategic Results Groups and most of the sub-task teams of the UN Sustainable Development Group. Its implementation of the commitments under the reform are each at different stages of maturity:

Resident coordinator (RC) system
UNOPS is committed to "adequate, predictable and sustainable funding of the resident coordinator system"[54]. Reflecting this, UNOPS has:

- paid the double cost-sharing for the RC system in full over the last biennium, and in a timely manner.[55]
- established accountability of country directors to RCs and taken part in a pilot of mutual country-level performance appraisals.[56]
- made RC nominations with, as of January 2020, one former staff member now serving as RC, one staff member in the RC pool, and organisation-wide encouragement for staff to pursue RC roles.[57]

Principles of mutual recognition
UNOPS was involved in the design of the mutual recognition statement and signed it. As "the central procurement resource for the UN-system,"[58] UNOPS has policies and procedures related to procurement, administration, human resources and logistics that enable "mutual recognition of another entity's policies and procedures."[59]

There is documentary evidence of UNOPS applying mutual recognition principles in procurement, for example supporting the procurement of USD 82 million worth of goods through 'UN Web Buy Plus' as part of shared services provided across the United Nations and on behalf of governments. Work on behalf of UN partners in procurement has increased by 34% since 2015 and by 70% in the area of human resources. These two service lines comprise around 83 per cent of UNOPS' delivery to organisations in the UN system."[60]

54 2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p8
55 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p7; Implementation of GA RES 72-279, Addendum to UNOPS Information Note
56 Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021
57 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Regular Session 2020, p2.
58 EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017.
59 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p3
60 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p5

Box 7: Implementation of UNDS reform (*continued*)

1% co-ordination levy

After the introduction of the 1% co-ordination levy and the guidelines issued by the UN Secretariat, UNOPS applied the guidelines to its engagements with its partners. UNOPS interpretation of the guidelines was that given the nature of its mandate, its funding and its accounting principles the levy would not apply to most of its services. Whilst this was confirmed by the UN Controller, UNOPS was still requested to apply the levy as per the spirit of the decision in 2020 and thus UNOPS has taken steps to "ensure implementation of the co-ordination levy will be managed in accordance with the operational guidance and its financial regulations and rules adopted by Executive Board decision 2012/5."[61]

In December 2020, it was determined that UNOPS will apply the levy to all legal agreements, and that it would be applicable to any new engagement that had not yet been recorded in oneUNOPS or that was in "Opportunity" status as of 1 January 2021.[62]

Management and Accountability Framework (MAF)

UNOPS welcomes the MAF at a strategic level[63] and has included "provisions that recognised the country representative's relationship vis-à-vis the UN Resident Coordinator under the new Management and Accountability Framework[64], such as mandatory results in the performance assessments of Country Directors relating to UNCTs, in line with the MAF. However, no further guidance on implementing the framework was identified by or provided to the assessment team.

Its non-programmatic but cross-cutting operational mandate offers UNOPS the flexibility to engage in a wide spectrum of sectors and country contexts – UNOPS is not constrained by a programmatic mandate, nor by earmarked funding as are many other UN organisations, but can respond to many different types of demand from an array of different partners and seize different opportunities. It thus, has the possibility to engage where it has a strong comparative and/or competitive advantage. These specific conditions and the wide scope for engagement also obliges UNOPS to be particularly mindful of how it selects and prioritises projects and partners, to remain consistent with the Strategic Plan and its UN mandate.

Within each engagement, the service delivery mandate also allows a wide scope of involvement for example in project design, from providing limited input in the spirit of a contractor delivering what was agreed on the one hand, to a more involved engagement as a partner, who would help improve a project design to ensure relevance and sustainability. The extent of engagement is laid out in the project (legal) agreement.

In responding to continued or increasing demand for its services, UNOPS must proactively leverage its comparative and collaborative advantage and protect its reputational assets through demonstrable delivery. As the assessment shows, given its demand driven business model, UNOPS often brings different combinations of its comparative and collaborative advantages depending on operating context. UNOPS undertakes detailed external analysis, including competitive analysis as part of regional business planning risk assessments, and applies specific positioning principles in responding to demand, to ensure it is positioned as a trusted and recognised partner with key donors to the regions. Some of the overarching aspects of UNOPS' comparative and collaborative advantage are summarised in Table 3, below.

61 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, pp.3-4; Annual report IAIG - Audit Advisory Committee 2019, Pos. 60

62 Guidance Note on the 1% Levy and its inclusion in partner negotiations, 2020

63 Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019: pp.1-6

64 2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p33.

Table 3: Comparative and collaborative advantage of UNOPS

	Comparative and collaborative advantage
UN status	Allows UNOPS to promote and enact the UN Values and Behaviours into its working with non-UN partners.
Mandate	Non-programmatic, self-financing mandate seen as providing greater flexibility than programmatically mandated UN agencies.
Operating model	Lean operating model provides conditions for flexibility and adaptability and responsiveness to market demand, partner need and operating conditions.
Technical knowledge in service lines	Strong technical knowledge and reputation for delivery based on experience and expertise provide enhanced credibility. Service lines meet partner demand.
Implementation excellence	Operating model geared to efficiency and project implementation built on the internationally recognised European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) performance management standards for business excellence, and organisational architecture to ensure application and compliance.
Robust and informed risk management	Risk management systems, processes and tolerance allow UNOPS to work in very difficult operating countries/context including for example, conflict-affected or fragile situations; situations where governance is challenging – or that are experiencing, or have recently experienced – a significant humanitarian crisis.
Competitive fee structure and cost recovery	Lean operating and business model allows for cost advantage to be leveraged. Fee structure and cost recovery perceived as reasonably competitive by partners.

Note: Comparative advantage is understood as a specific advantage (technical expertise; cost efficiency; ability to work in contexts of interest) over other agencies providing similar services, whilst collaborative partnership is related to mutual benefit from working together in partnerships where UNOPS and its partners agree to contribute resources (such as finances, knowledge and people) to accomplish a mutual goal.

Driven by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), UNOPS has recently extended its data analytics on comparative and collaborative advantage, through a systematic and detailed examination by partner and in region to clearly distinguish UNOPS' value add alongside identifying alternative providers in these regional operating environments.

Using a range of analytical tools, this comprehensive approach to key partnership analysis sets out partner strategic priorities and characteristics; highlights UNOPS' differentiated approach though an assessment of alternative providers, and where they exist; identifies UNOPS' unique added value and value proposition linked to partner priorities, simultaneously identifies comparable project examples to identify learning and opportunities for replicable practice. Noting its recent development, the intent for the *Partnership Analysis, Differentiation, and Key Partner Strategy* information is to be actively maintained along UNOPS' other partner strategy tools and business intelligence reports.

With respect to what and how UNOPS delivers to respond to demand, UNOPS' results framework consists of three mutually reinforcing contribution goals and four management goals. Its contribution goals express the overall value proposition whilst the management goals are associated with UNOPS excellence agenda. For its contribution goals, UNOPS reports its results in terms of outputs delivered and explains this by reference to its mandate: as a service provider, UNOPS delivers its operational development results through partners who are ultimately accountable for outcomes and impact, whereas UNOPS is accountable for the outputs that can be directly attributed to it. Whilst quantitative targets and metrics exist for the management goals, there are no corresponding targets for the contribution goals.

Rooted in the understanding of the role of a service provider, UNOPS' results framework (Box 3, above) shows how UNOPS contributes to partner outcomes through output (products and services) and how outcomes are country or partner owned results**.** Given the demand driven business model and the service provider mandate, success internally

is perceived more in terms of efficient and increasing delivery, rather than in terms of outcome and impact; a major difference from other UN organisations.

This is also reflected in the results management practices. With a results framework where UNOPS is not accountable for outcomes, UNOPS also does not conduct or commission independent evaluation of outcomes or impact. Indeed, whilst UNOPS is data driven in terms of data analytics for demand and delivery of output, it has hitherto allocated more limited corporate resources to assess, test, examine, report, and share lessons learnt.

In addition to better understanding demand, UNOPS needs to understand how and why it delivers effectively – what works, what doesn't, why, where, for who, and under what conditions. UNOPS has taken initial steps to improve its systems and process for better managing knowledge and lessons learnt; IT upgrades and a Knowledge Management Strategy introduced in 2018 are an indication of intent to significantly improve. UNOPS acknowledges that, "without well-developed knowledge management systems, the incredible body of knowledge we collectively have, will only remain in the minds of individuals. We are on a journey to change this."[65]

These evolving knowledge and data systems are timely initiatives, which can help show both the strong demand for UNOPS services and a correlation with global challenges. The intent expressed in the Strategic Plan is to "provide a differentiated account, increasing the transparency of the value [that UNOPS] contributes to different parts of the overall value chain". In communicating the value it adds, UNOPS will more clearly delineate between 'indirect' and 'direct' contributions made to expand partners' implementation capacity – between the 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' it enables – the different ways, in various 'results-chains', in which it advances achievement of objectives." The further development of these quite complex results measurement systems would be critical to inform UNOPS efforts to remain relevant and effective.

Remaining agile for operational excellence

UNOPS' history is one of continuous change and adaptation, something that has resulted in a culture that values and rewards innovative thinking and informed risk-taking. UNOPS' leadership, which was recently reorganised to be leaner and more flexible, is structured to drive effective collaboration across units. The SLT has clear ambitions for the organisation and has generated a shared vision among personnel and a sense of ownership of its reform programme. The organisation's receptiveness to reform and change provides a solid foundation for its ability to adjust to changing circumstances and meet evolving demands. The responsive and adept reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic is a recent example of this.

Innovation and change imply risk and carefully managing and mitigating that risk is essential for UNOPS. UNOPS has a clearly articulated risk and quality framework (the Governance, Risk and Compliance framework) to support the organisation in managing risks and is aware of the many different types of risks it is exposed to. At corporate level, these include, for example, financial risk of not meeting net-revenue targets, reputational risk from taking on high-operational-risk projects, and risks of not contributing to the goals of the strategic plan if pursuing an opportunistic engagement approach rather than a strategic one. UNOPS describes the approach to accepting engagement risk as "not risk averse, but risk aware" and refers to "managing through SMART risk response processes." Evidence from different sources shows that UNOPS does not shy away from undertaking relatively high risk projects and activities. UNOPS also recognises different types of risk related to both project level and engagement level and operates based on an engagement acceptance process where different types of risks of all major engagements are carefully assessed, following a rigorous assessment framework.

65 UNOPS Knowledge Management Strategy, 2018, Foreword.

UNOPS also has a strong internal control environment. This includes internal audit and investigation, ethics and compliance, and an enterprise risk management framework. External audit, complying with international standards, are mandatory and in addition UNOPS is regularly assessed by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) and the United Nations Board of Auditors (UNBOA) and has undergone additional EFQM assessments which is unique in the UN system. Review of recent external audits confirm compliance with international standards across functions. Audits include a Management response providing a clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit and responses are closely monitored through monthly reporting in the Quarterly Business Review.

UNOPS' organisational structure is consistent with its non-programmatic mandate, and its project driven organisational structure and self-financed business model allows for flexible footprints in the form of physical country presence that respond to and evolve with the demand for its services. Whilst this presents advantages in terms of cost and flexibility, the contingency on demand also to some extent presents a trade-off with continuity and ability to engage systematically for example in the UN Country Teams (UNCTs), or to develop and engage with new partners unfamiliar with UNOPS. UNOPS has to manage this trade-off, when making decisions on country presence and allocating scarce management resources. Myanmar is one example where UNOPS plays a significant role in the UNCTs as a result of its large and stable presence, and UNOPS is also active at senior levels in contributing to and driving elements of the UNDS reform where it can bring its unique experience and expertise to bear.

UNOPS' system of decentralised decision-making, clear target setting, and close performance monitoring is well established, a result of the effectiveness agenda, and allows regular tracking and proactively identifying and addressing any delays or problems.

Indeed, unique in the UN system, UNOPS has taken inspiration from the EFQM model of business excellence[66] and this combined with the project driven organisational structure and decentralised decision-making has contributed to UNOPS' reputation for excellence in project implementation.

Ensuring the conditions of financial sustainability

Unlike many UN organisations with programmatic or normative activities, which are financed predominantly through core and non-core contributions, UNOPS services are provided against coverage of the direct cost, plus a management 'fee for service' covering immediate and potential future indirect costs. The assessment finds UNOPS to have a solid financial framework. The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies, and a clear biennial budgetary framework and rigorous budgetary process ensure that priority areas have adequate funding, and UNOPS has a sufficient level of reserves. Ongoing discussions are underway regarding the sufficiency of levels of reserves, given an intention to accept larger volume engagements (for example, a recent large-scale project in Mexico), with corresponding increase in risks.

Many advantages of its business model notwithstanding, it also presents UNOPS with some trade-offs. Financially, this relates to the funding structure: increasing revenue from fees may be needed to further invest in operational excellence, but in the process may jeopardise UNOPS' competitiveness, and hence its financial foundation. Part of UNOPS' competitive advantage is its relative low cost, and there is a strong incentive for UNOPS to maintain competitive costs and fees structures. Hence, to keep costs low UNOPS is very cost conscious when allocating corporate resources. Activities aimed specifically at addressing for example cross-cutting issues or setting up comprehensive and systematic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems that lay outside the boundaries of a project design, are funded by the management budget and hence made in competition with funds for other corporate functions including compliance, strategy and governance.

66 https://www.efqm.org/

Box 8: Main strengths and areas of improvement identified in the MOPAN 2020 assessment

Main strengths

- UNOPS is defined by a culture of innovation and a solutions-focused approach, providing a solid foundation for further growth, consistent with its strategic direction.
- Managing and mitigating risk is fundamental for UNOPS; to manage such risks UNOPS has built robust enterprise risk management and internal control frameworks, aligned to an overarching governance, risk, and compliance framework.
- UNOPS is not constrained by a programmatic mandate, nor by earmarked funding, it thus has the possibility to engage where it has strong comparative or collaborative advantage.
- The demand driven organisational structure and operating model gives UNOPS agility, flexibility, and responsiveness; UNOPS is able to rapidly resize and reorient organisational structures including its geographical footprint. This was evident for example in the efforts and initiatives that UNOPS has undertaken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Decentralised decision-making and the application of systematic management practices and recognised international standards have contributed to UNOPS' reputation for excellence in project implementation. This is an area of permanent focus and one of the pillars for its growth ambitions, together with the continuous adaptation of the type and scope of services provided.

Challenges and areas of trade off

- Its self-financed, non-programmatic, cross-cutting operational mandate provides a large degree of flexibility but also implies a dependence on generating business in a way no other UN organisation has. This can be a challenge and carries several risks (for example financial risk of not meeting net-revenue targets, or operational risk from certain types of projects). Its wide scope for engagement also obliges UNOPS to be critically conscious of how it selects and prioritises projects and partners, to remain consistent with its Strategic Plan and its UN mandate and commitments.

Box 8: Main strengths and areas of improvement identified in the MOPAN 2020 assessment (*continued*)

- The lean and flexible structure, with physical country presence contingent on demand for its services, is one of UNOPS' strengths. However, it also presents some degree of trade-off with continuity and ability to engage systematically, for example, in UNCTs, or to develop and engage in new partnerships.

Areas for improvement

- A fundamental aspect of business excellence (the EFQM model) is continuous learning and improvement, and the integration of feedback loops and sharing of lessons learnt is a welcome area where UNOPS has announced its intention to intensify efforts.

- Development results in UNOPS are formally reported in output terms. UNOPS has announced an intention to better track "direct and indirect contributions", and a better consistency in the usage of definitions between UNOPS results terminology and that applied by peers and partners would help clarify the nature and scope of these contributions.

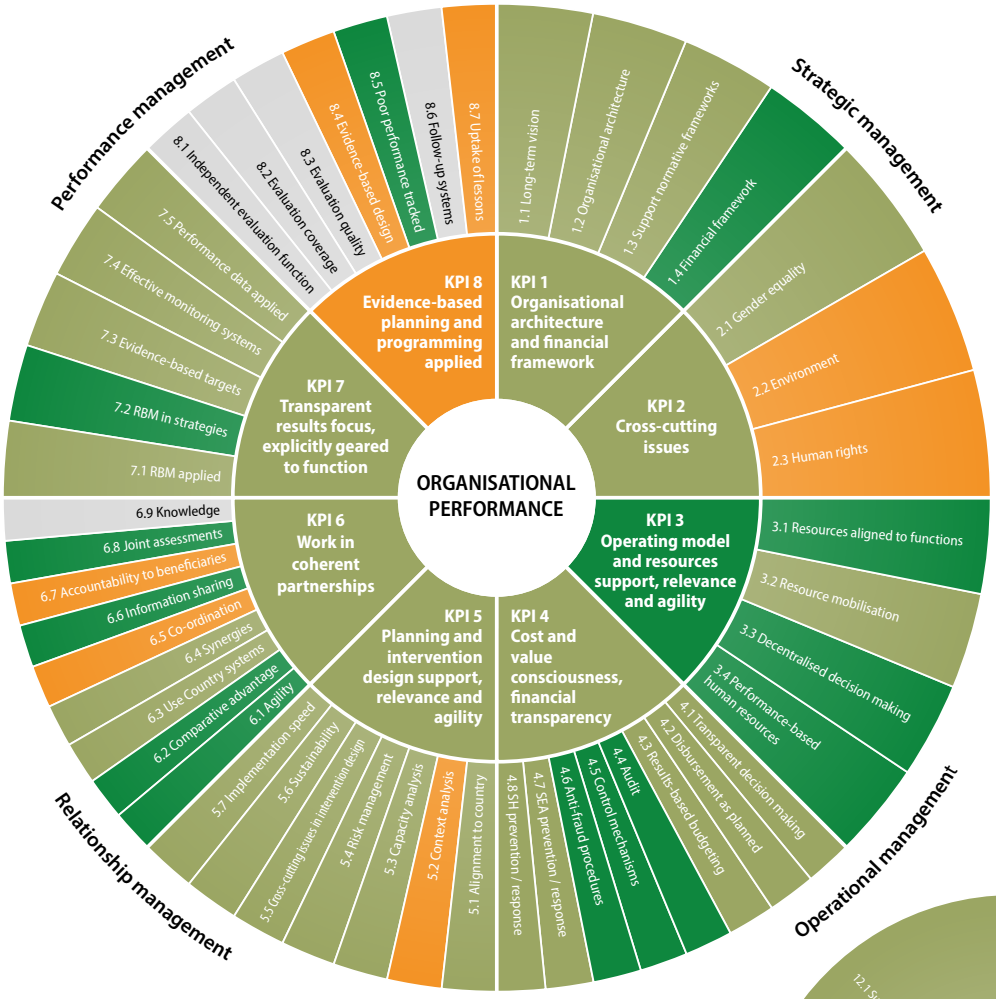
- Given its commitment to UN values and global commitments such as SDGs, reporting on and integrating concerns related to gender mainstreaming, environment, and human rights is emerging as an area for improvement.

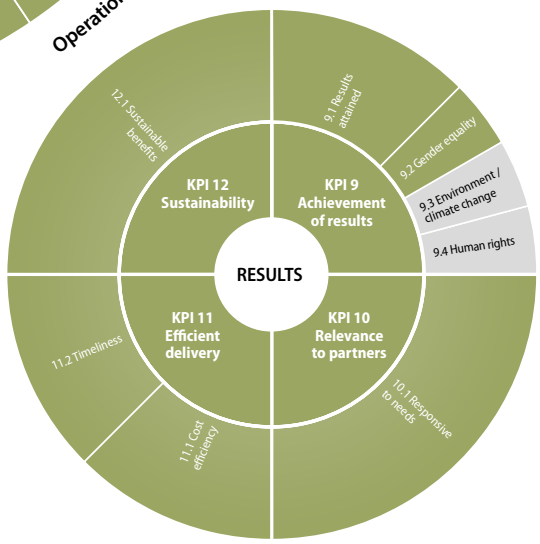
- Whilst UNOPS knowledge management system is maturing and improving, two issues are signalled for further consideration: i) the balance between attention to systems for sharing of lessons from implementation versus systems for data analytics by demand, especially given the ambition to evolve the service lines and solutions offered which need to be informed by lessons learnt, and ii) introducing a certain degree of post project assessment work on the contribution of the outputs to the partner's broader objectives would strengthen the credibility of the self-reported results and by implication the accountability to stakeholders.

2.2. UNOPS'S PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY

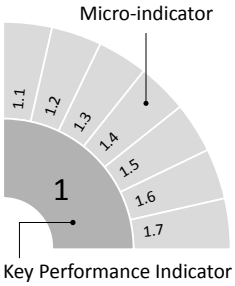
Performance conclusions consider four key attributes of an effective organisation: (i) whether it understands future needs and demands; (ii) whether it is organised and makes use of its assets and comparative advantages, including operating in coherent partnerships; (iii) whether it has mandate-oriented systems, planning and operations; and (iv) whether it adapts / makes consistent improvements according to its resource level and operational context.

For the 2020 assessments, further consideration is throughout also given to the organisation's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its universal and transformational effect on UNOPS' mandate, mission, operations and activities.





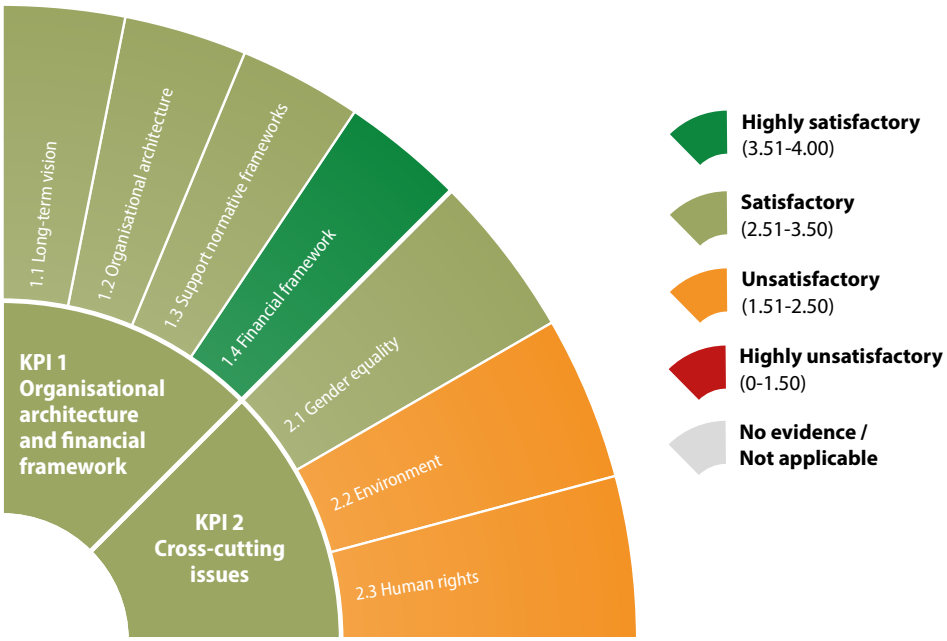
How to read these charts



- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

HIGHLIGHTS BY PERFORMANCE AREA

Strategic Management



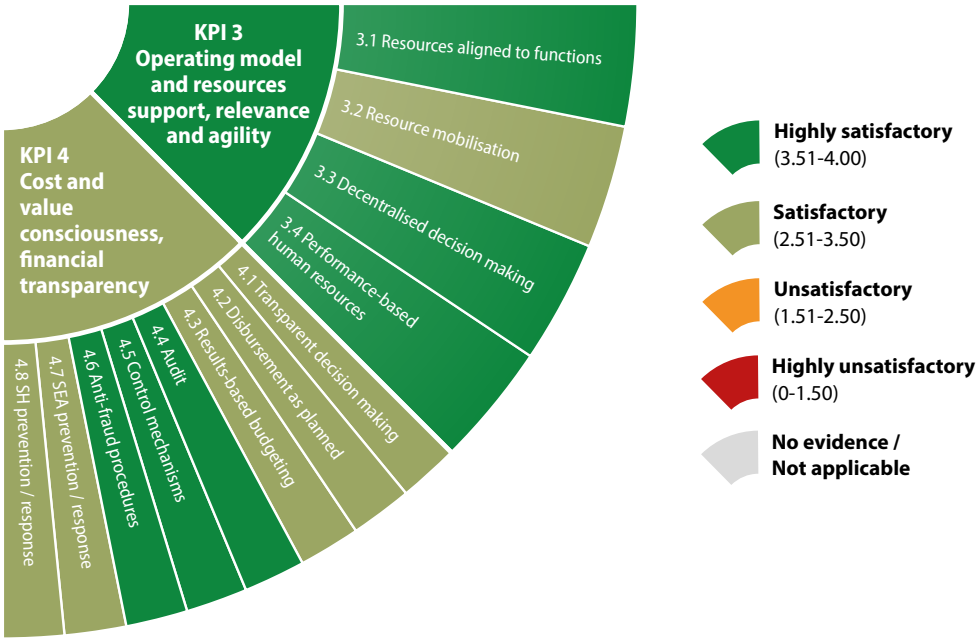
Strategic Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 1: The organisational architecture and the financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results.	3.31
KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels	2.78

UNOPS' non-programmatic and demand driven business model makes it a highly agile organisation. Its organisational architecture has been flexibly aligned to support the ambitions of the Strategic Plan. Its financial model and framework, unique in the UNDS system, is strong, and interviews with UNOPS personnel and management demonstrated a clear focus on the principles of financial sustainability and health, with many citing the historic financial situation of UNOPS as a driver for continued vigilance. Among partners, different evidence points to mixed understanding of the pricing policy.

UNOPS is guided by two sets of goals: contribution goals and management goals centred on generating value for UNOPS partners both as an end in itself and a means for further business development. UNOPS must demonstrate value for money and be transparent in its cost structure to remain relevant and competitive.

The project-based nature of work and the demand driven business model to some extent determines how and where UNOPS can make contributions to SDGs and other global commitments. Given this limitation, whilst cross-cutting issues, in particular gender, are reflected and integrated within UNOPS systems, there remains room for improvement in ensuring that all cross-cutting issues are adequately and consistently addressed. Partner survey results from 2021 for example show a larger share of respondents agreeing that "UNOPS promotes gender equality" than that "UNOPS is a trusted partner in climate resilient infrastructure". Survey results do, however, also show a lack of familiarity amongst partners with UNOPS work in these areas, in particular with respect to climate resilient infrastructure.

Operational Management



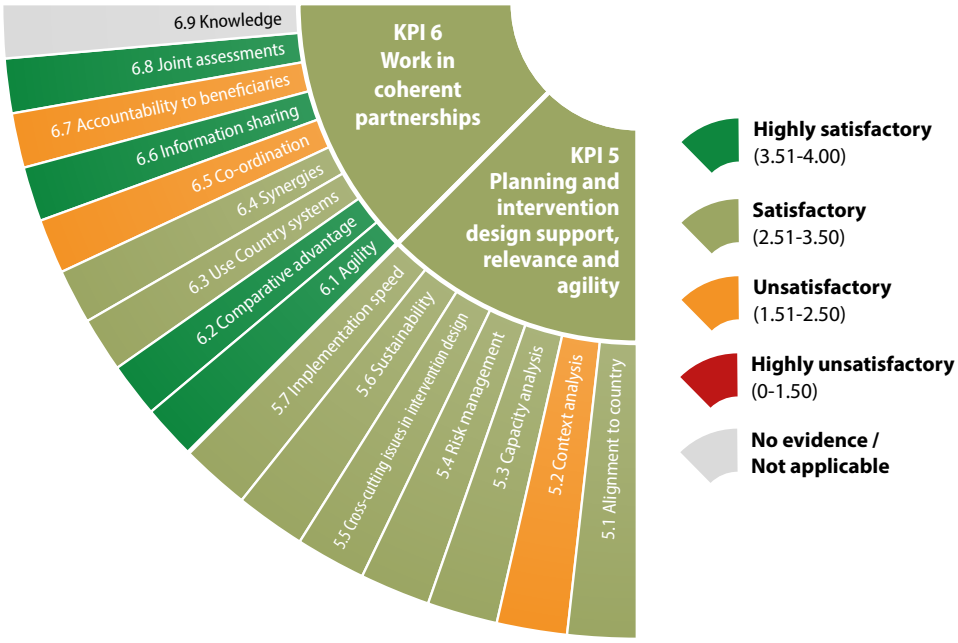
Operational Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility.	3.77
KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability.	3.40

Organisational structure, including country presence, and personnel and other resources are flexibly, effectively, and cost consciously aligned and deployed in response to evolving demands and requirements of service delivery and business development. Whilst five service lines remain the bedrock of UNOPS expertise, it continuously monitors demand trends and adjusts its response, with accountability and decision-making authority cascaded throughout the organisation, ensuring effective delivery of commitments and awareness of future possibilities. The 2021 Partner Survey found all five service lines to be relevant to partners, and that UNOPS has relevance across all UN pillars. Unique in the UN system, UNOPS' continuous improvement approaches have been assessed by EFQM.

Selection and prioritisation of engagements includes dialogue on design and risk assessments. UNOPS has a strong internal control environment and enterprise risk management framework. In addition, a specific Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy is currently being developed as part of UNOPS ethics and compliance framework.

Among other types of risks, SH and SEA risks can be recorded and classified in oneUNOPS Projects, through the enterprise risk management functionality available across all projects, engagements and organisational units.

Relationship Management



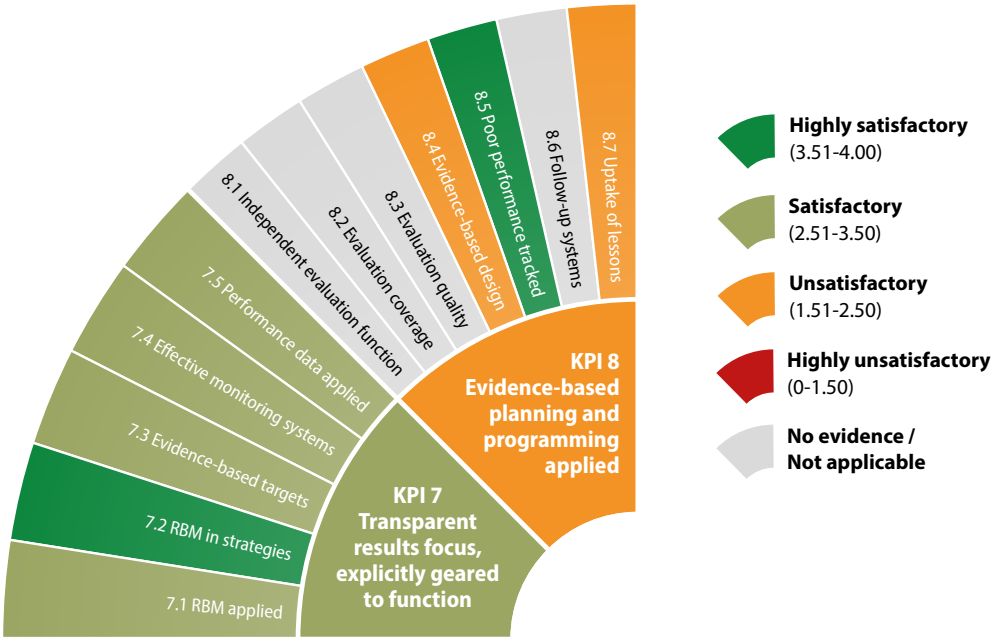
Relationship Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships.	3.22
KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources.	3.10

Engagement opportunity development and acceptance are framed by regional business strategies and respond to the needs and demands of partners, taking into account national strategies and objectives. Consideration of country context, however, is less systematised and whilst partner interviews commended UNOPS personnel for their technical expertise, there was in a few cases a perception that some lacked political skills required to operate effectively in highly sensitive contexts. Consistent with this, the assessment considers political risk as the weakest element of UNOPS' otherwise comprehensive risk management architecture as these risk factors were not reflected in risk registers to same extent as other risk categories.

UNOPS' engagements hold multiple accountabilities: to its commissioning partner(s), and to the beneficiaries or stakeholders (direct and indirect). Because UNOPS is a service provider implementing projects on behalf of partners, it considers that the accountability to beneficiaries is primarily with the partner. As a result of this, approval mechanisms do not explicitly include the requirement to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries will be addressed in the intervention, nor has training been conducted on procedures for accountability to beneficiaries.

Bespoke procedures and tools encourage joint planning and engagement with commissioning partners at project level and mechanisms, including budgetary and governance arrangements, allow necessary project changes and adjustments, as employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such joint efforts are less in evidence with respect to development partners, which is some cases can be explained by the scope and type of country presence or the lack thereof which may constrain engagement with UNCTs and other development partners. There was a general sense, from the 2021 Partner Survey, of high satisfaction of working with UNOPS, a willingness to work with UNOPS again and to recommend it to others but that the visibility to external partners could be enhanced and partner communication with stakeholders during collaboration improved.

Performance Management



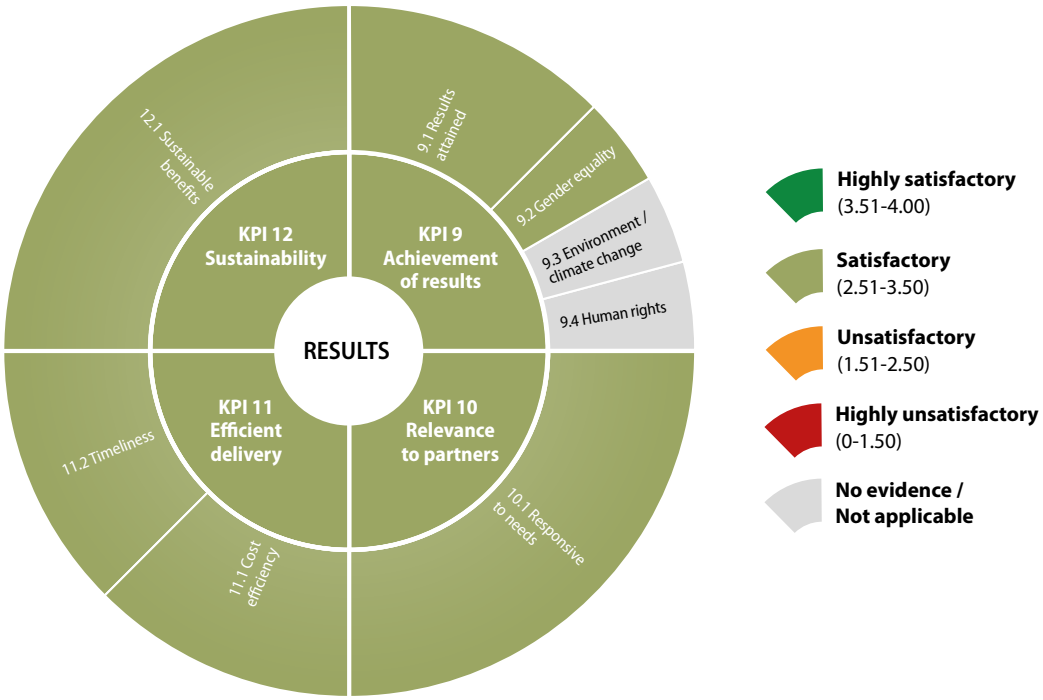
Performance Management KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function.	3.49
KPI 8: The MO applies evidence-based planning and programming.	2.45

UNOPS conceptualises traditional monitoring and evaluation within a knowledge management framework and has, over time, strengthened its focus on results. Management results and targets are clear and tracked in the Balanced Scorecard, and through cascading, regularly updated business plans.

Aiming to better understand the contribution of its output to partner's broader objectives, internal discussions on measuring and tracking results beyond output have focused on accounting for UNOPS' contributions, direct and indirect. Whilst impact language is used on UNOPS website this has yet to be systematically implemented and a better consistency in the usage of definitions between UNOPS results terminology and that applied by peers and partners may be sought.

UNOPS is strengthening its data for business intelligence, with improvements to a global library for lessons, risks and issues underway as the centre piece of the Knowledge Management Strategy. UNOPS, unlike most multilateral organisations, does not have an independent evaluation function. In the absence of an evaluation function the assessment of KPI 8 rest on only three MIs. These capture areas in which the UNOPS knowledge management architecture is still being formalised including disseminating lessons learnt within and beyond UNOPS and demonstrating how these lessons are used to develop engagements and improve performance.

Results



Results KPIs	KPI Score
KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved, and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals.	3.00
KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate.	3.00
KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently.	3.00
KPI 12: Results are sustainable.	3.00

In the absence of independent evaluation and given UNOPS' agreement with its Executive Board to report only to the level of output, the evidence base for this results section is primarily internal and self-reported with less independent, external sources than is usually the case in MOPAN assessments.

UNOPS' strongest features are in the relevance of its interventions and the effectiveness in delivering development output, almost unanimously appreciated by partners and evident in performance data. The financing model encourages financial discipline and efficiency, evidenced in UNOPS comparatively low fees. Self-reporting also shows good goal achievement and contributions to gender related global goals. UNOPS working methods and practices contribute to ensure a certain degree of sustainability of results.

UNOPS' contribution to environmental sustainability and human rights results have not been rated due to organisational targets not assessing the degree of contribution to results.

2.3. UNOPS' FUTURE TRAJECTORY

The preceding sections have discussed the specifics of UNOPS and highlighted key strengths, trade-offs and areas for improvement. How UNOPS maintains the strengths and addresses the areas for improvement will determine the trajectory of its performance journey, and its ability to address emerging and future trends and seize opportunities.

UNOPS has a strong change management capacity and is on a continuous improvement journey; its narrative has over the years evolved from being primarily a technical agency adopting a role more of a contractor, to today being a strategic partner focused on the change it can make to people's lives and how it responds to the SDGs. UNOPS' openness and responsiveness to change is an asset in a rapidly transforming world. For UNOPS, a challenge for the future will be to maintain and embed institutional identity. UNOPS operates in many different ways and different contexts, and hence for partners may have many different identities. To maintain the present comparative advantage, partners need to know what UNOPS stands for and can do and clear communication from UNOPS is therefore fundamental.

The Strategic Plan articulates UNOPS' value proposition, aiming to better convey and establish the connection between its business model and value chain. The aim is to move up the value chain - to engage with partners "earlier on and higher up" (i.e. engaging with partners higher up in the decision-making process - and to add value to the SDGs. Such change could be articulated more clearly and explained to partners and stakeholders and should be accompanied by strong results tracking and measurement systems to demonstrate exactly the contribution UNOPS can make, the role it plays with partners, and its unique position in the UN development architecture as a service provider, rather than a normative or programmatic entity.

UNOPS is well recognised as being an excellent project implementor with a unique strength and track record in implementing infrastructure projects. Moving "higher up" and along the value chain may mean facing new competitors and having to demonstrate its excellence in these new areas, whilst maintaining its existing comparative advantage that supports its financial foundation.

Alongside this continued evolution may come a shift in attribution and accountability requirements. UNOPS is currently held accountable for delivering output, though is increasingly aware of the need to improve data at project level for output, outcome, and impact in some cases and has a stated intention to gradually improve the way it tracks and assesses direct and indirect contributions, for example to see where projects have most influence across SDGs.

Pursuing this path, UNOPS may be expected to improve its capacity and systems to measure these contributions, something that is methodologically challenging, and which is generally seen to require an independent evaluation or validation function to be fully credible. As this evolution of understanding and demonstrating attributable contribution is further developed in UNOPS, necessary adjustments to the ways in which UNOPS reports its results would emerge. This could also be an opportunity for UNOPS to clarify the boundaries of its accountability within its different types of services and moving beyond business metrics of performance (work won/turnover) towards responding to the "so what" questions: what difference are we making? What changed as a result? What implementation capacity have we build in which partners? Opportunities for strengthening post project assessment work on the contribution of the outputs to the partner's broader objectives exist.

UNOPS offer services categorised in five service lines and three service types. In addition to the intent described above to engage "earlier on and higher up," UNOPS also has a stated intention to increasingly provide integrated solutions. This comprehensive and wide-ranging package of UNOPS operational services lines and solutions indeed further adds to the challenges of assessing results. Adding in a geographical aspect of UNOPS' services further complicates results tracking and sets UNOPS further apart from peers: where programmatic Multilateral Organisations (MOs) like UNDP have the same outcome in all regions linked to national plans, UNOPS has different 'identities' across regions with

different types of output. For example, in Europe/Central Asia UNOPS predominantly host global initiatives; setting up and helping with rules and processes, and in Latin America, UNOPS provides services to governments using national partners mainly in procurement and infrastructure. UNOPS' engagement in the Asia region is dominated by Myanmar which is the largest UN operation whereas in the Middle East and Africa (MR and AFR) regions UNOPS works with different donors and the UN on sensitive operations such as in Gaza.

These 'identities' can shift and move and evolve in different directions. In addition to being able to track and explain a range of very different result, at the strategic level UNOPS needs a strong centripetal force to keep it on the direction laid out in the strategic plan. Yet, this may pose a trade-off with the demand driven business model as demand is varied and constantly changing across countries and context. UNOPS has to consider being strategic verses being responsive to demand, operating based on standardisation (fixed service lines) versus tailoring (how large a menu of different services is feasible?). Flexing and evolving the service lines whilst maintaining the competitive advantage that UNOPS has developed is thus one of the future challenges.

However, it also presents an opportunity: that of applying its recognised implementation efficiency capability in new settings; or with new partners (both within and beyond the UN). This is, however, predicated on strong lessons learning and knowledge management; areas which are still under development in UNOPS, such as the global issues, risks and lessons-learnt library, which remains a work in progress and not fully rolled-out.

Whilst giving UNOPS some unique flexibilities, its demand driven model also carries risks and performance related issues to consider. UNOPS has a revenue side other MOs do not have, as they would receive regular assessed and voluntary contributions, based on their mandate, with greater flexibility to allocate funds across the organisation. In contrast, each UNOPS field office has to be independently financially viable and revenue is generated through projects. This requires quite skilful and rigorous budgeting and also means that UNOPS' presence on the ground ebbs and flows to reflect project engagement at the expense of continuity of presence. Partner interviews and interviews with personnel, however, revealed that UNOPS engagement is easier and more successful where there is already an established presence. There is, thus, an inherent trade-off between the flexibility of the demand driven project model and the advantages of a more stable presence allowing continuous engagement with potential business partners and engagement in the UNCTs across regions. The COVID-19 pandemic has required much more virtual engagement than ever before and this may mean better systems and practices are now in place: how UNOPS is able to learn from, maintain, and further develop such new working and engagement practices can have a big impact on its future trajectory in terms of both business development and better engaging in the UNCTs, i.e. focusing on the "UN flag" part of its identity.

UNOPS, by way of its more private sector approach and its proactive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is well placed to engage and contribute effectively to the UN system-wide strategy on the future of work and the Future of the United Nations system workforce.[67] This capacity could be seen as an advantage vis-a-vis its future engagement and potential demand for services from sister UN agencies.

Financial stewardship is one of UNOPS' four management goals and ensuring financial health and sustainability remains a demonstrable strategic priority and focus. Accompanying UNOPS' higher ambitions and engagement in new areas and with news way of working comes increasing risk and a need for significant financial muscle. The increased size, volume, and variety of UNOPS' engagements, and increased risk profile this implies, require sustained and diligent attention to critical financial metrics and indicators, where UNOPS will need the Executive Board's engagement.

67 https://unsceb.org/topics/future-work

DETAILED LOOK AT KEY FINDINGS

Chapter 3

Detailed look at key findings

3.1. ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

This chapter provides a more detailed assessment of UNOPS' performance across the five performance areas – strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and performance management and results – and the KPIs that relate to each area, accompanied by their score and rating.

MOPAN Performance scoring and rating scale

- Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)
- Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)
- Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)
- Highly Unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)
- No evidence / Not applicable

Assessment key findings draw on information from the three evidence sources (document reviews, interviews and a partner survey – see Chapter 4 for more information) and the section uses quotes from the survey to illustrate findings and highlight feedback from stakeholders. Further analysis per micro-indicator and detailed scoring can be found in Annex A. For the full list and citation details of the documents referred to, please see Annex B.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities

The nature of The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) operations mean that it must be able to manage risk and adapt to changing contexts and UNOPS' project-based and non-programmatic business model provide a great deal of flexibility and makes it a highly agile organisation. It is guided by two sets of goals: contribution goals and management goals centred on generating value for UNOPS partners both as an end and a means for further business development. Organisational architecture has been flexibly aligned to support the ambitions of the Strategic Plan. The demand driven nature of work and service provider mandate frames the extent of contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global commitments.

There is mixed performance in integrating cross-cutting issues; gender is adequately reflected and integrated but there are opportunities to further strengthen integration of cross-cutting issues related to environmental sustainability and climate change, and human rights as key considerations for UNOPS services. The assessment notes that given UNOPS' financial model management budget to address these concerns (outside the boundaries of project agreements) are allocated in competition with funds for other management requirements. It should be noted, that just under three quarter of demand for UNOPS' services comes from UN agencies and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) countries, who themselves have mandates and commitments supportive of cross-cutting issues.

KPI 1: The organisational architechture and the financial framework enable mandate implementation and acheivement of results

Score: 3.31

UNOPS has a clear strategic plan (Strategic Plan 2018-21), endorsed by the Executive Board which is publicly available. The strategic plan frames UNOPS' strategic direction and lays out its mission and vision. A self-assessed mid-term review was conducted in 2020 confirming the relevance of the strategic direction and the viability of UNOPS' business model and its priorities and goals.

UNOPS derives part of its comparative advantage from its non-programmatic mandate and self-financed demand driven business model, which is unique in the UN system. This business model supports UNOPS's ambition of becoming "a better known and recognised resource for Member States and the Secretary-General."[68]

UNOPS' value proposition and intended results are conceptualised around two sets of goals: contribution goals and management goals, the latter with clear targets, assigning responsibility for results. The link between these two sets of goals is not explicitly articulated in the strategic plan which states that, "the strategic goals provide a mutually reinforcing framework to drive realisation of the UNOPS mission, vision and purpose.[69]"

UNOPS' global organisational architecture and structure have been continuously refined in recent years to ensure alignment with, and delivery of, the Strategic Plan and work activities contributing to it. Effectiveness of the operating model requires a certain flexibility in terms of the architecture, achieved through careful planning and continuous assessment of UNOPS' operational footprint, based on its operational engagements and projects.

UNOPS' Strategic Plan is aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, yet UNOPS does not publish a consolidated organisational perspective of SDG related data on its own platforms. Nonetheless, it does complete the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) survey and provide an assessment of the correlation between global needs and UNOPS activities in its annual report.

A clear biennial budgetary framework and rigorous budgetary process ensure that priority areas generally have adequate funding and UNOPS has a sufficient level of reserves. Interviewees however considered that UNOPS cross-cutting priorities are under resourced across the organisational levels.

The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies. Unlike UN organisations with programmatic activities, which are financed predominantly through core and non-core contributions, UNOPS services are provided against coverage of the direct cost, plus a management 'fee for service' covering immediate and potential future indirect costs. (Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, pgs. 2, 18). Ongoing discussions are underway regarding the sufficiency of levels of reserves, given an intention to accept larger volume engagements (for example, the recent large-scale project in Mexico), with corresponding increase in risks.

UNOPS' timely and effective reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic is testimony to the flexibility and agility of the Organisation (see Box 6 below).

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles

Score: 2.78

Structures and mechanisms to support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues are strongest in the area of gender.

UNOPS has a dedicated policy on gender equality, covering both internal and external dimensions. A number of internal gender indicators, including in the balanced scorecard, are regularly tracked and reported to the Senior Leadership Team and external accountability systems, including UN system-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP). Gender screening is mandatory for all projects whilst Gender Action Plans, are not mandatory for projects, but are routinely tracked and monitored. Field-level resources on gender are limited and, whilst dedicated Gender Mainstreaming and

68 Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, pgs. 2,21.

69 UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021, para. 57

Social Inclusion Specialists/focal points are present in some instances, the role is voluntary and supported by a pool of advisers/experts. Personnel capacity development on gender is undertaken (e.g., I Know Gender).

UNOPS has a Sustainable Procurement unit and, whilst no dedicated policy for environment and climate change is present, a range of related issues are covered through an Occupational Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management (HSSE) policy. This policy brings more of a practitioner/implementation-based lens and is risk driven. Implementation of the policy is currently perceived by personnel as primarily 'check-box' in nature. A limited number of environmental sustainability and climate change indicators are included in the balanced scorecard and populated as of last year, confirming the intention to improve in this area. Personnel interviewed were consistently aware and training is available and implemented on HSSE issues. Partner survey results from 2021 for example show a larger share of respondents agreeing that "UNOPS promotes gender equality" than that "UNOPS is a trusted partner in climate resilient infrastructure". Survey results do however also show a lack of familiarity amongst partners with UNOPS work in these areas, in particular with respect to climate resilient infrastructure. The previous partner survey, 2019, found that gender equality (SDG 5) to be the top focus area for partners.

UNOPS has no dedicated policy on human rights and protection of vulnerable people, though issues are to some extent covered through the HSSE and gender policies and included in a vendor self-assessment programme, Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement (DRiVE), initiated by UNOPS to support suppliers to adhere to high social standards. The balanced scorecard has one indicator, tracked as of last year, covering compliance with minimum requirements on HSSE. This is supplemented with more comprehensive reporting captured in the Global Reporting Index (GRI) Content Index, provided as an annex to the annual report. As for the other cross-cutting issues, there are limited human and financial resources, but personnel interviewed are consistently aware of and have undertaken the training on implementing the social and environmental screening.

A Social and Environmental screening is mandatory for all Category 2 and 3 projects (those considered medium-high risk and presenting medium-high project management requirements).

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance, agility and accountability

Organisational structures (including country presence), personnel, and other resources are flexibly, effectively and cost consciously aligned and deployed in response to evolving demands and requirements of service delivery and business development. Five service lines continue to form the bedrock of UNOPS' expertise, though it continuously monitors demand trends and adjusts its response.

Clear accountability and decision-making authority are cascaded throughout the organisation, ensuring effective delivery of commitments and awareness of future possibilities. Selection and prioritisation of engagement include dialogue on design and risk assessments and, unique in the UN system, UNOPS continuous improvement approaches have been assessed by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). It has a strong internal control environment and enterprise risk management framework, and in addition, a specific Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy is currently being developed as part of UNOPS ethics and compliance framework. Among other types of risks, SH and SEA risks can be recorded and classified in oneUNOPS Projects, through the enterprise risk management functionality available across all projects, engagements and organisational units.

KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility — Score: 3.77

UNOPS business model is inherently agile, with its organisational structure meeting the requirements of its mandate and strategic plan. Personnel and other resources are flexibly aligned and deployed in response to evolving requirements of service delivery. UNOPS has a comparatively small and declining number of staff holding traditional UN fixed-term/permanent contracts, maintaining flexibility to engage and deploy personnel on different types of contract depending on needs and demand. An internal restructuring, including of the Senior Leadership Team, has recently taken place and interviews at time of assessment indicated that this new structure is bedding in. UNOPS has positively responded to and engaged with UNDS reform, with due consideration to the limitations posed by presence at country level that is dependent on demand for UNOPS services. Unlike programmatic organisations, UNOPS' business model does not allow for a comprehensive footprint in all regions and countries.

UNOPS has experienced growth across all its five service lines[70] which are a long-standing feature of its mandate. Partners confirmed in the 2018-2019 survey that all five service lines remain in demand, with most indicating demand for more than one, a finding reaffirmed in the most recent, 2021 partner survey. The Strategic Plan emphasises that, whilst these service lines are the bedrock of UNOPS expertise, it is its ability to flexibly combine them as integrated offerings and specialised solutions that increases the value it can add to the 2030 Agenda and countries' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNOPS signalled in interviews a strong intention to engage with partners "earlier on and higher up", and regional business plans and other corporate documents demonstrate engagement supporting diversification, including through use of different long-term funding frameworks and models. The Quarterly Business Reviews track UNOPS net engagement revenue, per region, as well as its direct, locally managed, regionally managed, and centrally managed costs.

As of the time of assessment, the 1% levy was not yet systematically collected and passed on to the UN Secretariat, however, in December 2020 it was determined that UNOPS will apply the levy to all legal agreements, and that it would be applicable to any new engagement that had not yet been recorded in oneUNOPS or that was in "Opportunity" status as of 1st January 2021 (Guidance Note on the 1% Levy and its inclusion in partner negotiations, 2020).

70 The five service lines are: infrastructure, procurement, project management, human resources, financial management, and other management services

Box 9: How has the COVID-19 response affected UNOPS' mandate and delivery?

COVID-19 has placed a renewed emphasis on prevention and resilience in the health care sector worldwide, and with its experience UNOPS is considered well placed to support the global response to the pandemic.[71] The organisation has supported efforts in over 70 countries around the world to mitigate impact since the onset, through delivery of human resource services, emergency health procurement, rehabilitating hospitals/health centres and financing sustainable infrastructure[72] in alignment to delivery of the core mandate. An initial overview of how UNOPS has responded to COVID-19 and its effects is presented within the Report of the Annual Session of the Executive Board 2020 which took place on the 5-6 June 2020.

UNOPS had already begun to establish strong, strategic partnerships in health-related procurement and infrastructure in 2019 and has been working to broaden its partnerships and funding base within the context of COVID-19.[73] A 'COVID-19 partner interaction tracking sheet' and dashboard summarises all engagements. UNOPS reported, as of 14 May 2021, finalising agreements for USD 968 million of COVID-related engagements and managing a further USD 61 million of engagements where partners have pivoted funding from existing commitments.[74] UNOPS has been working closely with other UN organisations and national Ministries of Health under the leadership of respective Resident Coordinators and has also collaborated with financial institutions such as the World Bank and played a key facilitating role within the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and engagement with the private sector.

UNOPS is viewed by partners as being agile and able to respond quickly and adjust effectively to changing contexts such as COVID-19 and this has been particularly evident within the core service line of procurement, in relation to emergency health procurement, and for establishing vital infrastructure. As well as delivering aspects of the core mandate in response to the pandemic, UNOPS was also noted to be flexible with partners and responsive, with partners noting that UNOPS was quick to engage on understanding which programmes could no longer be implemented, where there would be shortfalls and underspend, and then initiate a good dialogue to ask what could be done. Partners further indicated that there was strong efficient engagement on COVID-19 response and using UNOPS was considered 'a no-brainer'. Specific examples cited, include partners making contract amendments to allow UNOPS to act as a procurement agent for medical equipment in a very challenging market where there was lots of demand for equipment.

Although individual projects have experienced multifaceted challenges over the past year due to COVID-19, overall UNOPS performance has been in line with historical performance and on track to meet annual targets.[75] UNOPS plan to focus on helping implement programmes to enhance community resilience in the future, as countries move towards recovery, prioritising the strengthening of infrastructure and re-establishing supply chains to make them more inclusive and sustainable consistent with UNOPS core mandate and the contribution goals.

UNOPS has a strong Delegation of Authority (DoA) and Accountability Framework, which is cascaded successfully through the levels of the organisation. Positive partner feedback in this assessment provides evidence of speed of decision-making and adequate delegations of authority, whilst UNOPS' own partner surveys in 2019[76] and 2021

71 Annual Report of the Executive Director 2021

72 Report of the annual session 2020.

73 https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/covid-19-stay-up-to-date-with-the-latest-on-unops-support-to-response-efforts

74 End Stage Report of the COVID-19 Response Global Task Force, 2020

75 Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements

76 UNOPS Partner Survey Presentation, June 2019. 78% of respondents agreed that "The UNOPS team responds quickly to requests or issues", compared with 69% of respondents who agreed that "The UNOPS team completes milestones in a timely manner."

largely confirmed a perception of good performance in terms of response to requests or issues but less so in terms of delivery of projects on time. The Balanced Scorecard includes indicators on decentralisation effectiveness.

Comprehensive HR systems and policies are in place for performance-based assessment for UNOPS personnel, performance targets and rewards are at team level and are geared to the achievement of results. Rewards and incentives are based on achievement of team targets, rather than individual, whilst still allowing individual contributions to be recognised (e.g., Annual Awards). Documentary and interview evidence indicates that the performance assessment system is systematically implemented in UNOPS for all personnel. A clear process is in place to manage disagreement and complaints regarding personnel performance assessments.

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability

Score: 3.40

An Operational Instruction on 'Acceptance of Engagements' provides a framework for developing, assessing, and accepting Engagement Agreements. The Strategic Plan highlights the importance of adequate scope for adaptation across different contexts, using country typologies and risk indicators to inform medium- and longer-term planning. The midterm review of the Strategic Plan illustrated that there is high correlation between UNOPS activity and global needs; with "most of its activities concentrated in the lowest ranking countries on the Human Development Index and the highest ranking on the Humanitarian Risk Index". The Operational Instruction on Acceptance of Engagements was most recently revised in 2020 and updated in accordance with the Project Management Manual.

UNOPS has clear targets for delivery and financial data indicate that overall planned delivery met institutionally agreed performance targets, including over performing against targets in 2019. Audit reports provide explanations for variance against plans, as does the UNOPS Annual Report. Variance relates primarily to external factors, including COVID-19, though some internal bottlenecks are noted in Audit and Board reports which UNOPS is taking steps to address; including improving performance on operational closure, identified as an area needing improvement.

UNOPS applies the principles of output-based budgeting, aligned with its Strategic Plan. Budget documentation is available for management results in the 2018-2019 biennium, though the most recent iteration (2020-21) does not contain such granular information. As a result of UNOPS' decision to monitor and report only to output level, there is no evidence on costing of contribution goals that would inherently go beyond output. UNOPS' project management platform, oneUNOPS, is under continuous improvement but already allows comprehensive tracking of costs from activity to output and contributes data to the Quarterly Business Reviews which include quarterly output reporting.

UNOPS has a strong internal control environment, including internal audit and investigation, ethics and compliance, and an enterprise risk management framework. External audits, complying with international standards, are mandatory and in addition UNOPS is regularly assessed by JIU and the United Nations Board of Auditors and has undergone EFQM assessments; unique in the UN system. Review of recent external audits confirm compliance with international standards across functions. Audits include a management response providing a clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit and responses are monitored monthly and reported in the Quarterly Business Review.

UNOPS has a strong culture of ethics. Investigation and anti-fraud and -corruption processes and practices are well institutionalised, with cases of misconducted effectively explored, concluded and reported, including to the governing bodies. A resolution process for both formal and informal grievances exist and advocacy campaigns have been conducted, i.e. 'Speak Up'.

UNOPS has a Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, with mechanisms in place to regularly track status. SH and SEA risks can be recorded and classified in oneUNOPS Projects, through the enterprise risk management functionality available across all projects, engagements and organisational units. Regional plans are mandatory for PSEA, but country plans remain optional. Designated PSEA focal points are beginning to be assigned and trained but no other dedicated human or financial resources are currently allocated. Training plans demonstrate an ambition to build awareness on SEA policies, an intention which may, however, have been affected by COVID-19. Evidence exists on standards and due diligence processes to ensure that implementing partners prevent and respond to SEA. Joint working with UNFPA is underway though and UNOPS is a member of the UN PSEA working group. The Executive Director (ED) reports on sanctions and internal audit have also conducted investigations. There is evidence of intention to strengthen a victim/survivor-centred approach.

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy is jointly articulated with the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Strategy but has separate mechanisms in place to regularly track status. UNOPS has clearly identifiable roles and structures (network of peers), including psychological support. The SH & SEA Strategy makes training intentions clear, and evidence suggests training and personnel awareness building has been undertaken. However, no evidence was found of dedicated financial resources being available to implement the strategy. 'SPEAK UP' hotlines exist and UNOPS acts in a timely manner, with transparent reporting through the annual report of internal audit and ED report which feed into inter-agency mechanisms.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, leverage effective solutions and maximise results

Engagement with partners, including opportunity development and engagement acceptance, are framed by regional business strategies. These in are based on an assessment of UNOPS comparative advantage in the region and respond to clearly identified needs and demands, taking into account national strategies and objectives. Project review and dialogue shape the final design of projects, including attention to existing implementation capacity.

UNOPS engagements hold plural accountabilities: to the commissioning partner(s), and to the beneficiaries or stakeholders.

Bespoke procedures and tools encourage joint planning and engagement with commissioning partners at project level. Project management mechanisms and governance allow necessary project changes and adjustments, including budgetary, as evidenced during COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is significantly less emphasis on, and support for, engagement with end-users and affected populations. UNOPS do not use the language of accountability to beneficiaries and interviewed personnel placed little emphasis on engagement with end-users or community-level stakeholders.

The lack of comprehensive country presence constrains engagement with UN Country Teams and other development partners.

There was a general sense, from the 2021 Partner Survey, of high satisfaction of working with UNOPS, a willingness to work with them again and to recommend them to others but that their visibility to external partners could be enhanced and partner communication with stakeholders during collaboration improved.

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships

Score: 3.22

As a demand driven organisation, UNOPS' business plans and portfolio of projects respond to clearly identified needs. Regional strategies take as point of departure national strategies and objectives. Whilst the stakeholder perspective is evident in corporate documentation, because of UNOPS' business model and practice of being responsible to output level only, end-user considerations are not weighted equally. UNOPS has plural accountabilities, on the one-hand to its commissioning partner(s), and on the other to the beneficiaries or stakeholders of its work (where the two diverge), e.g., end users of UNOPS-built infrastructure. UNOPS has structures and incentives in place for personnel that allow them to invest time and effort in engagement process (i.e., opportunity; pre-engagement; initiation) both for partnership and technical personnel.

UNOPS has in many cases a somewhat limited engagement in the design of projects, as a result of its business model. UNOPS only takes full responsibility for project design where the organisation is commissioned to provide it by the partner. However, in the case of infrastructure projects where a project failure would be a serious reputational risk, UNOPS also engage with partners on existing designs and conduct a mandatory design review.

UNOPS Project Management Manual, otherwise generally a very clear and detailed tool, does not clearly include a formal requirement to conduct a contextual analysis as part of the development of an engagement. During project implementation, however, there is clear evidence that reflection points with partners routinely take place and take note of any significant changes in context, including through regular progress reporting.

Box 10: Capacity assessment tools

Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure (CAT-I):

- CAT-I is an assessment tool to "identify governments' capacity gaps to plan, deliver, and manage infrastructure systems [including] status (the existence of crucial processes, documents and skills) and effectiveness (determining if the existing resources are used properly to produce their intended effects)."[77] It can be used either in partnership with government or as a service provided by UNOPS.

Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool (PEAT):

- PEAT is a diagnostic tool, designed for use with public sector entities, "identifying possible improvements, which are within the power of the entity to implement"[78] within procurement. It is a capacity assessment commissioned by national partners, which can then be used as a platform to supplement and build procurement systems.

Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement (DRiVE):

- DRiVE is a mandatory self-assessment questionnaire, carried out by potential UNOPS suppliers (and verified on an as-possible basis by UNOPS). In return, suppliers are provided Corrective Action and Preventative Action Plans to help them strengthen social responsibility in their practice. DRiVE is used by UNOPS to understand the sustainability of markets and identify areas for capacity building and has been conducted with over 2100 suppliers, in 135 countries.

Given its mandate to "expand implementation capacity across peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts," UNOPS considers capacity in engagement development from different perspectives. For instance, how UNOPS can offer support to capacity of National Public Partners or the capacity of implementing partners to fulfil engagement requirements. Formal processes exist to judge institutional capacity, with tools available and used for capacity analysis. These include the Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure, the Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool (PEAT), and Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement (DRiVE). These tools create detailed action plans which contain strategies for addressing weaknesses; with reflection points built into the process. No evidence was available to indicate that findings from capacity assessments are routinely shared with development partners.

Intervention designs include analysis of, and mitigation strategies for, all risk assessed categories,[79] though political risk factors were not reflected in risk registers to same extent as other risk categories. UNOPS has built an increasingly robust enterprise risk and control framework, aligned to the overall governance, risk, and compliance framework. UNOPS describe this approach as "not risk averse, but risk aware" and refers to "SMART risk". Among other types of risks, SH and SEA risks can be recorded and classified in oneUNOPS Projects, through the enterprise risk management functionality.

UNOPS applies a 'do no harm' approach and, reflecting this, requires all projects to undertake a gender assessment and all applicable projects to undertake a HSSE assessment. The DRiVE supplier sustainability assessment is mandatory and includes 3 direct questions related to gender and 8 indirect questions (e.g., PSEA). The Project Management Manual includes the requirement to monitor the project success criteria, which include cross-cutting considerations, throughout the project lifecycle.

77 CAT-I assessment manual, p17

78 Procurement Advisory Services Factsheet - Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool, p2

79 Operational, strategic, political, and reputational risks.

UNOPS operates within a formal sustainability framework, with project designs (both UNOPS' own and the ones from partners) screened for sustainability considerations. Through CAT-I, legal and policy sustainability considerations, such as national regulatory capacity, are assessed, with suggested shifts in policy and practice reflected in a tailored action plan. Likewise, dimensions of sustainability are included in the self-assessed Results Based Reporting survey, undertaken at project conclusion to contribute to the GRI sustainability reporting.

UNOPS has internal standards set to track implementation speed, with the proportion of projects delivering against baseline implementation plans tracked and monitored through the Quarterly Business Review, disaggregated by region. Institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs; in addition to a dedicated policy setting out emergency procurement procedures for crisis response, the Project Management Manual includes numerous channels for flexibility to amend projects on an as-needed basis, in a formal and structured way.

Interviewed partners confirmed that these measures are successful. However, interview evidence and UNOPS' partner survey also suggest that, in some areas including procurement, procedural delays have hindered speed of implementation. Whilst the significant majority of partners praise UNOPS implementation speed, roughly a third indicate that implementation speed is a challenge.[80]

KPI 6: Partnership working is coherent and directed at leveraging and catalysis the use of resources

Score: 3.10

Procedures and tools (including project definition workshops and CAT-I) are in place to encourage joint planning and engagement with commissioning partners at project level. Mechanisms, including budgetary, are in place to allow project changes and adjustments when conditions change with detailed change management procedures in the Project Management Manual. Institutional procedures for revisions permit changes to be made at the appropriate level; this was highlighted both in standard operations, and in the context of UNOPS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, both in adapting existing projects, and supporting governments in specific engagements to respond to the pandemic.

Corporate documentation contains clear and explicit statements on the unique value added and advantage that UNOPS brings to partnerships including through delivery of projects within its service lines; and more importantly through the ability to flexibly combine them as integrated offerings and specialised solutions. A clear expression of collaborative advantage (i.e. what the partnership can achieve together towards the contribution goals) is less clear. In most cases, resources/competencies needed for intervention area(s) are aligned; although partner interviews show this is not universally the case. No evidence was available on whether guidance on implementing the Management and Accountability Framework exist and is being applied consistently.

Much of UNOPS' engagement is directly with national governments and UNOPS has a clear statement (including in the Strategic Plan and the Project Management Manual) on how the organisation will support principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda. No clear guidance however was available for how UNOPS supports development partnerships between countries, though project level evidence is available with examples of contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation. Evidence exists on how UNOPS use country systems through supporting national and local markets where there is a positive sustainability case to do so. Intrinsic to UNOPS' mandate and business model, internal structures are supportive of collaboration/cooperation with national partners as projects undertaken with national partners inherently reflect their needs and priorities. This is reflected in the

80 Timely delivery was recognised as an area of strength by just under two thirds of UNOPS partners in the most recent partner survey, slightly down from the previous survey where 69% held that view.

Project Management Manual which emphasises both joint planning and project management with partners through the Project Board.

Regional and country strategies comprehensively assess the context and possible synergies with development partners**.** Furthermore, UNOPS has a range of partnership arrangement modalities including Engagement Agreements; Collaborative Agreements; and Teaming/Joint Agreements which identify possible synergies with development partners and opportunities to leverage and catalytically use resources. These arrangements clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of the partnership.

UNOPS engages in joint exercises and mechanisms to the extent and where feasible, primarily focused on planning and co-ordination to support external coherence. However, it is limited in the contribution that it can make to field-level co-ordination mechanisms (such as UNCTs) by its service provision mandate, its project-based operation, and the flexibility of its geographical footprint.

UNOPS has a clear corporate statement on transparency of information that is aligned to the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Information is available on analysis, budgeting, management in line with the guidance provided by the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Responses to partner queries on analysis, budgeting, management and results are of good quality. However, interviews indicate that information sharing with partners is not always proactive and is not universally perceived as timely, a perception confirmed by UNOPS' own partner survey.

The assessment considered community engagement and accountability to end users, rather than accountability to beneficiaries. Whilst community engagement is evident in UNOPS Project Management Manual, no clear policy or guidelines exist and there is comparatively little emphasis on end users relative to partners. A Community Engagement Toolkit is available, and training has been conducted; though no evidence was found on approval mechanisms to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries are addressed in the intervention.

Participation and engagement with partners in mutual assessment is strong both at the corporate and at project level. Partners are involved with UNOPS in joint performance reviews of interventions at project level, and UNOPS undertakes a biannual partner survey and also regularly consult a client Board.

A statement exists in corporate documentation which recognise UNOPS' limited role in knowledge production, given UNOPS mandate. This is primarily for lesson learning and sharing good practices as opposed to supporting policy dialogue and/or advocacy.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems are geared towards managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson learning

UNOPS conceptualises traditional monitoring and evaluation within a knowledge management framework and has a progressively improving results culture. Management targets and results are clear and tracked in the Balanced Scorecard, and through cascading, regularly updated business plans. An intent to better account for contributions, direct and indirect, is evident and discussions in UNOPS on measuring and tracking results beyond output, as is currently the case, are ongoing.

UNOPS is strengthening its data for business intelligence, with improvements to a global library for lessons, risks, and issues underway as the centrepiece of the Knowledge Management Strategy. This feedback mechanism is based on self-assessment and UNOPS, unlike most MOs, does not have an independent evaluation function.

KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function

Score: 3.49

UNOPS has a strong corporate commitment to Results-Based Management (RBM), with a progressively improving results culture. Traditionally UNOPS has, by virtue of its service provision mandate, only reported results at output level. However, given the stated contribution goals and in view of emerging pressures to examine higher levels of the result chain prevalent across the development landscape, UNOPS has a stated intent to strengthen the assessment of direct and indirect contributions. UNOPS also does apply an impact language on its website and established a separate impact focused initiative: the Social Impact Initiative, S3I.

Guidance and tools for applying RBM approaches are available at project level (most notably through the Project Management Manual). Procedures and systems exist to cascade results and targets. However, target setting is informal and discursive, which makes it less transparent from an external perspective.

Organisation-wide plans and strategies, included in the strategic plan and regional strategies, are reflected in the Balanced Scorecard. Whilst both contribution goals and management goals are described in the Strategic Plan, the link between the two is not clearly articulated in a results framework. Through the business planning exercise, alignment and linkages exist between the different layers of the management results framework, from project to country and corporate level. The annual reports, including detailed performance assessment annexes, are discussed with the governing bodies and show progress over time and note areas of strong performance as well as deviations between planned and actual results. The strategic plan and regional strategies are updated on a quadrennial basis, with budgeting and business plans updated annually for regions.

Development of baselines are mandatory at project level for measuring management level performance (cost, time, quality, scope and risk and sustainability agreed with partners). At a project level, results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted with partners. At a corporate level, results targets are regularly reviewed through the Quarterly Business Review process. Project-level results targets, set out in the engagement contract and baseline implementation plan, are set through consultation with partners, however no formal mechanism was identified for the consultation of end users in this process.

The corporate monitoring system is adequately resourced, through the Quarterly Business Reviews and oneUNOPS **project management platform**. Investment into oneUNOPS has been significant and work is underway to strengthen the organisational understanding of UNOPS contribution. This includes assessing the correlation between global needs and UNOPS contribution and strengthening UNOPS' knowledge management. No dedicated training has been provided to personnel on RBM, though training on management for effective delivery of the agreed output

Box 11: How has UNOPS demonstrated its operational flexibility in responding to COVID-19

UNOPS has proven its operational flexibility in response to emergent situations such as COVID-19, expressing from the onset a readiness to take relevant measures consistent with the unique business model and continue responding to partner needs.

The general perception of personnel interviewed was that the organisation had responded well to the pandemic, albeit in the context of an increased workload due to involvement in a greater number of projects and activity directly due to the COVID-19 situation. Multiple personnel credited the organisation's *recent switch to G-Suite (Google)* as a facilitator for efficient and effective homeworking noting that this brought the entire organisation under one collaborative platform. The enhancement of the digital oneUNOPS' platform for organisation-wide efficiency, control, and business intelligence is seen as a key enabler of business continuity during the pandemic in addition to digitalisation of learning under the 'Learning Zone' and 'Google Currents platform' which acts like a bulletin board or Community of Practice for personnel.

A Global Task Force (GTF) was set up to provide "first line, dedicated support to business units in the implementation of new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, in order to maximise the impact that UNOPS can provide whilst protecting its interests"[81]. The GTF convened personnel across regions and HQ, reporting to the Shared Services Centre (SSC), to focus exclusively on new and current projects related to COVID-19 with responsibility for three streams of work: project engagement, project finance and procurement and supply chain. Establishment of such a task force has facilitated COVID-19 response as a service line, whilst also ensuring other HQ groups can continue to support the organisation on 'business as usual' activities. An End Stage Report[82] of the first phase of the GTF summarises that it "sought to anticipate field teams' needs by pulling in practices around the organisation to deliver the right people, tools, and support needed to respond to the crisis". The GTF identified procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Diagnostic equipment and clinical supplies as a priority and engaged in various activities to effectively and efficiently deliver this. That included writing a client facing concept note and standard technical specifications, establishing Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) to reduce duplicate work and increase speed of delivery, developing tracking and management tools, ensuring interagency co-ordination and building 'HR Surge Capacity' to ensure the right people could be mobilised quickly to meet project and partner needs.[83] Emergency Procurement Procedures (EPP) with dedicated guidelines for including gender criteria, have also been created and used.

Whilst travel for international personnel reduced significantly, this did not have a profound impact on UNOPS operations in most cases given the proportion of national personnel on the ground who were able to continue work on various projects and programmes in country during the second and third quarters of 2020. Partner interviews confirmed the positive experience and other positive assertions to note include perceptions that UNOPS was fast and efficient, with strong leadership, technical competence and an ability to draw on local capacity. That said, there have been locations where the pandemic caused delays in construction activities during periods of total lockdown where movement/public transport was prohibited, and concerns about lapses in quality when there have not been national personnel to provide supervision and oversight of infrastructure projects.

81 UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19, 2020

82 End Stage Report of the COVID-19 Response Global Task Force, 2020

83 Surge Capacity Factsheet, 2020

using oneUNOPS Projects has been delivered. Monitoring systems generate data at output levels of the results chain as well as management goal indicators. Reporting processes ensure data is available for corporate reporting and planning, including for internal change processes. Given the quantity of performance data produced and used by UNOPS, ensuring data quality has been identified as an area of focus receiving attention through strengthened quality assurance.

Planning documents are based predominantly on financial target agreements; adjustments to projects are informed by performance data through the quarterly assurance process. At corporate level, management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate: these are transparently applied. Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at country level.

KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming

Score: 2.45

The Strategic Plan includes a clearly articulated intent to build on experience and further develop UNOPS' systems to provide more systematic accounts of its contributions – direct and indirect - and their effectiveness. These accounts may relate to the context-specific risks people face, including in comparable country contexts, and/or the goals countries are striving to achieve. Practices and systems to collect, analyse and disseminate lessons learnt are currently nascent and more an informal than formal requirement, though significant improvements to the global library for lessons, risks, issues are underway.

The recent Knowledge Management Strategy has at its core the development of a global lessons-learnt library. Whilst consideration of issues of replicability is noted by personnel, this is nonetheless a welcome addition to UNOPS' more informal sharing of experience Systems and feedback loops are still evolving and hence no formal tracking and reporting of how lessons inform new interventions exist at present.

With its strong attention to delivering, UNOPS has a system to identify and track poorly performing interventions, through the Quarterly Assurance process at corporate and regional levels and through quarterly Project Board meetings at project level. A process for addressing poor performance exists, though partners note there is not always evidence of its use. Responsibility to take action is detailed clearly in the Project Management Manual.

No formal and systematic mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learnt internally or to partners exists. UNOPS personnel did however consistently identify a culture of informal lesson learning and information sharing between colleagues.

3.2. DEVELOPMENT/HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS

RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient manner

In the absence of independent evaluation and given the agreement that UNOPS reports only to the level of output, the evidence base for this results section is primarily internal and self-reported with less independent, external sources than is usually the case in MOPAN assessments.

UNOPS' strongest features are in the relevance of its interventions and the effectiveness in delivering outputs. The financing model encourages financial discipline and efficiency, evidenced in UNOPS comparatively low fees. Self-reporting also shows strong goal achievement and contributions to gender related global goals. UNOPS working methods and practices are geared towards sustainability of results, but the lack of long-term follow up or impact evaluation jeopardises assessment beyond output.

KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved, and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals

Score: 3.00

UNOPS has achieved the majority of stated output (results) and objectives (contribution goals), as detailed in Annual Reports, its Balanced Scorecard, and GRI reporting, the most important sources of evidence. Substantial self-reporting by projects at the output level also serve to demonstrate goal achievement, for example: *"60 per cent of relevant UNOPS projects reported a positive impact on local economies".* An important joint study between the University of Oxford-led Infrastructure Transitions Research Consortium and UNOPS supports the correlation of project outputs with SDGs through an indicative model for mapping the benefits of infrastructure projects to which UNOPS has provided services to the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNOPS undertakes self-reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment to output level; both in aggregate and through examples of its contributions to partner projects. According to these data, in 2019, 60 per cent of UNOPS infrastructure projects reported enabling equal access for women, impacting more than 9.3 million women; tracking contracts awarded to women-owned businesses and nearly 2 million of the ~5 million days of paid work created for local people by UNOPS in 2019 were for women and young people. These aggregate contributions are supplemented by project-level examples and testimonials throughout UNOPS' reporting.

There is insufficient evidence to assess the extent to which UNOPS' interventions have helped improve environmental sustainability/tackle the effects of climate change or human rights and the protection of vulnerable people.

KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate

Score: 3.00

UNOPS' demand driven business model, to some extent, ensures the organisation's relevance and, with constantly improving business intelligence data, UNOPS is also able to demonstrate how interventions correlate with areas of global priorities and are in areas of partner relevance and aligned to SDGs. The engagement review process further ensures relevance of UNOPS engagement, confirmed by interviews highlighting examples of projects that UNOPS had turned down as not within its mandate or criteria for accepting engagement. UNOPS also engages with commissioning partners in the design phase, to varying degrees, to ensure the relevance of the intervention design. UNOPS clearly works in the areas of its mandate, and regularly reports on the share of activities within each of its service lines and how these evolve.

UNOPS does not systematically track whether the interventions are directly responsive to the needs of end users or affected populations but does provide self-reported examples of projects with UNOPS contributions which are responsive to the needs of end-users/end-beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups.

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently

Score: 3.00

UNOPS' efficient and streamlined business practices, consistent with the requirements of the EFQM model for excellence and its focus on organisational viability for each business unit, supports the efficient delivery of results. UNOPS' business model rests on a principle of full cost recovery for services provided and UNOPS aims to minimise costs to partners. This is reflected in its average fee of 4.4%, which is lower overall than other United Nations entities' overhead. The UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions when reviewing UNOPS´s budget estimates for 2020-2021 requested that UNOPS consider the management fee it charges as part of its cost-recovery model in particular with a view to assessing a the potential financial surplus arising from "risk increments". The Committee asked UNOPS to take steps to "redouble its efforts to establish its management fees at realistic levels."[84]

UNOPS operates based on an external benchmark of 8% indirect cost but the complexity of some of UNOPS' projects however pose a challenge in meeting this ambition. Feedback from partner interviews showed mixed knowledge and understanding of the pricing model. Auditors' reports noted UNOPS did not fully implement its target of zero-net revenue, in line with the regulation mandating full cost recovery.

Timely delivery was recognised as an area of strength by just under two thirds of UNOPS partners in the most recent partner survey[85] which is a slight decline from 2019 findings. That said, regional differences persist with those in regions such as ECR and NYSC showing more favourable responses, and regions with more difficult contexts such as AFR, LCR and MR showing less favourable responses.

UNOPS acknowledge that timeliness could still be improved, with examples of project-level delays. The commitment to address this is reflected in the action plan responding to the findings of their partner survey 2019 and is closely tracked and monitored through the Quarterly Business Review.

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Score: 3.00

Many of UNOPS' sustainability results are generated by its working methods; for example, its sustainable procurement practices, which in 2019 received a fourth consecutive gold-level award from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, indicating recognition of its contribution to building capacity in this area.

In general, capacity building is a key element of sustainability and an embedded aspect of all UNOPS work, as evidenced in the GRI Content Indexes which document UNOPS' contribution to local capacity building activities. In the infrastructure service line, for example, 97 per cent of infrastructure projects self-reported contributions to sustainability across a range of economic, environmental and social aspects. Despite meeting most internal sustainability-related targets in 2018, UNOPS, regressed on some through 2019 according to self-reporting. However, numerous examples of self-reported sustainability contributions are included in the 2020 Annual Report, and annual sustainability reporting indicating further progress has been made in this area.

It should be noted, however, that these are self-reported results not validated by independent evaluators; UNOPS does not conduct impact evaluations to independently assess whether its sustainable practices do, in fact, attain sustainable results.

84 United Nations Office for Project Services budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019.

85 UNOPS Partner Survey 2021.

ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT

About this assessment

4.1. THE MOPAN APPROACH

The approach to MOPAN assessments has evolved over time to adjust to the needs of the multilateral system. The MOPAN 3.1 Approach, applied in this assessment of UNOPS, is the latest iteration.

MOPAN conducted Annual Surveys from 2003 to 2008 and used a methodology titled the MOPAN Common Approach during 2009-2014. The MOPAN 3.0 Approach was first adopted for the 2015-16 Cycle of Assessments.

In 2019, MOPAN 3.0 was relabelled as MOPAN 3.0* to acknowledge a change in how ratings (and their corresponding colours) were aligned with the scores defined for indicators. Compared to previous cycles conducted under MOPAN 3.0, the threshold for ratings was raised to reflect increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring remained unaffected.

Starting in 2020, all assessments have used the MOPAN 3.1 Methodology,[86] which was endorsed by MOPAN members in early 2020. The framework draws on the international standards and references points, as described in the Methodology Manual. The approach differs from the previous 3.0 approach in the following ways:

- Integration of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda into the framework
- Two new micro-indicators (MIs) for the prevention and response to SEA/SH
- The incorporation of elements measuring key dimensions of reform of the United Nations Development System (UNDS Reform)
- A reshaped relationship management performance area, with updated and clearer key performance indicators (KPIs) 5 and 6, which better reflect coherence and which focus on how partnerships operate on the ground in support of partner countries (KPI 5), and how global partnerships are managed to leverage the organisation's resources (KPI 6).
- A refocused and streamlined results component.
- A change to how ratings (and their corresponding colours) are applied, based on scores defined for indicators. Compared to the previous cycles conducted under MOPAN 3.0, the threshold for a rating has been raised to reflect the increasing demands for organisational performance in the multilateral system. The underlying scores and approach to scoring are unaffected. This approach was already implemented in MOPAN 3.0* (2019 cycle).

Table 4 lists the performance areas and indicators used in MOPAN 3.1.

86 Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States. Observer: Qatar.

87 MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, http://www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf

Table 4: Performance areas and key performance indicators

Aspect	Performance area	Key performance indicator (KPI)
Organisational effectiveness	Strategic management	**KPI 1**: The organisational architecture and the financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results
		KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels
	Operational management	**KPI 3**: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility
		KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability
	Relationship management	**KPI 5**: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships
		KPI 6: Partnership working is coherent and directed at leveraging and/or ensuring relevance and the catalytic use of resources
	Performance management	**KPI 7**: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function
		KPI 8: The organisation applies evidence-based planning and programming
Development/ humanitarian effectiveness	Results	**KPI 9**: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved, and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals
		KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, and the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate
		KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently
		KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Source: MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, http://www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf

4.2. APPLYING MOPAN 3.1 TO UNOPS

Interpretations and adaptions to the methodology

This assessment has used the MOPAN 3.1 methodology,[87] but the KPIs have been interpreted so as to be meaningful given UNOPS' specific mandate.

The use of a standard approach and methodology is one of the core strengths of MOPAN assessments; with adaptation in terms of interpretation preferred over modification. This has been the primary goal of the adaptation process for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) assessment; with interpretations agreed with UNOPS and endorsed by the MOPAN Secretariat. 22 interpretations were agreed and endorsed. Below is a summary of the key adaptations and interpretation proposed with the rationale for each major change. Details, and some minor changes proposed, are provided in Annex A. Annex A also contains text that has been adapted. Interpretations of elements in KPIs and MIs are indicated in the underlined, italicised font.

87 MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, http://www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf

Where a case is established for the identification of micro-indicators (MIs)/elements that did not apply to UNOPS because of its mandate, business model, or organisational structure, these were considered not applicable – there are 32 elements agreed and endorsed as not applicable (*N/A - Element does not apply to the MO's mandate and context*) in this assessment primarily linked to 4 MIs in KPI 8.

There are 2 instances where insufficient evidence was available to assess the element[88]. These are considered *N/E - Not possible to assess the element as no evidence is available.*

Performance Area: Strategic Management

Key Performance Indicator 1

MI 1.4: (Financial frameworks supporting mandate) – the standardised formation does not capture the specificity and key characteristics of the self-financing modality of UNOPS, where funds are generated from management fees and cost recovery and no resources are mobilised from donors. To address this, two key interpretations were applied: i) in Element 1, the inclusion of financial reserves as these are critical for UNOPS' financial sustainability, and ii) in element 2, issues related to transparency of its financial model were emphasised.

Furthermore, as UNOPS does not receive any donor funding three elements are not applicable. Specific interpretations were as follows:

- Element 1: assessment adds in specific reference to *reserves*.
- Element 2: replaced with the following: A clear budgetary framework ensures transparency on both management expenditures and revenue.
- Elements 4, 5 and 6: Not Applicable.

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 1: Financial and budgetary planning ensures that all priority areas have adequate funding in the short-term or are at least given clear priority in cases where funding is very limited.	**Element 1:** Financial and budgetary planning ensures that all priority areas, including reserves are adequately funded in the short-term or are at least given clear priority in cases where funding is very limited.
Element 2: A single integrated budgetary framework ensures transparency.	**Element 2:** A clear budgetary framework ensures transparency on both management expenditures and revenue.

Performance Area: Operational Management

Similar to KPI 1, given the self-financing modality of UNOPS, interpretations related to its ability to fund and manage its activities were necessary. KPI 3 adaptation related to MIs 3.2 and 3.3 (related to resource mobilisation) and in KPI 4 adaptation related to MIs 4.1; 4.2; 4,3; and 4.7 (which interprets UNOPS' *suppliers* as equivalent to *implementing partners* related to programming).

Key Performance Indicator 3

As UNOPS is demand driven, self-financing and non-programmatic, it does not have projects of its own; nor does it mobilise resources as other MOs do as reflected in the standardised MOPAN framework. UNOPS is dependent on demand for its services, that are provided based on a cost recovery principle and in addition UNOPS receives a management fee: its resources are thus dependent on partner engagement which generates revenue to fund its corporate activities. KPI 3 was therefore interpreted through a business development and partner engagement lens, which are the revenue generating activities.

88 MOPAN Methodology Guidance, 3.1, Detailed Scoring, page 29.

MI 3.2: The assessment and interpretation of elements is geared to *'sources of revenue'* (fees and cost recovery) rather than *'resource mobilisation'*, with specific interpretations as follows:

- Element 1: assessment focuses on sources of revenue (partner demand for UNOPS services)
- Element 2 and 3: assessment focuses on business development activities for generating resources
- Element 4: Not applicable.

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 1: Resource mobilisation strategy/ case for support explicitly aligned to current strategic plan.	**Element 1:** Corporate documents provide strategic direction in terms of sources of revenue, (partner demand for UNOPS services) consistent with strategic plan.
Element 2: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support reflects recognition of need to diversify the funding base, particularly in relation to the private sector.	**Element 2:** Business development support diversification of partners and demand for UNOPS offerings.
Element 3: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support seeks multi-year funding within mandate and strategic priorities.	**Element 3:** Business development practices and modalities encourage predictable multi-year engagement.

MI 3.3: The assessment and interpretation of elements is geared to *decision-making on engagement acceptance and portfolio management*, rather than on programming and allocation decisions, and specifically where decisions are made, which applies well with respect to engagement and portfolio management. Specific interpretations are as follows:

- Element 3: assessment focuses on the extent to which engagement and portfolio management decision-making occurs close to the client

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 3: Evaluations or other reports contain evidence that reallocation/ programming decisions have been made to positive effect at country or other local level as appropriate.	**Element 3:** Evidence shows that engagement and portfolio management decision-making occurs close to the client/ partner.

Key Performance Indicator 4

Given UNOPS is demand driven and non-programmatic, it does not have programmes; it operates based on projects aligned to its service line offerings and hence does not allocate resources to country or sector programmes. The assessment was therefore interpreted to consider transparency in terms of partner engagement, how partners are selected and how priorities are established.

MI 4.1: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator is geared to *'transparent decision-making for engagement with partners'* rather than to *'transparent decision-making for resource allocation'* and assessed the transparency of how decisions on which projects to engage in are made.

MI 4.2: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises that UNOPS implements projects on behalf of partners. It does not apply the term 'disbursement' but applies the term 'delivery'.

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 1: The institution sets clear targets for disbursement to partners.	**Element 1:** The institution sets clear targets for delivery to partners.
Element 2: Financial information indicates that planned disbursements were met within institutionally agreed margins.	**Element 2:** Financial information indicates that planned delivery was met within institutionally agreed margins.

MI 4.3: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises that given UNOPS' service delivery mandate, it considers itself responsible and accountable only to output level; '*Results-based budgeting*' is therefore interpreted as equivalent to '*output-based budgeting*', acknowledging UNOPS' focus is on outputs and application of output-based budget reporting along the five service lines. Specific interpretations are as follows:

- Element 3: interprets the term '*result*' as '*output*'

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 3: Systems are available and used to track costs from activity to result (outcome).	**Element 3:** Systems are available and used to track costs from activity to result (output).

Performance Area: Relationship Management

Key Performance Indicator 5

The assessment considered the essence of ensuring relevance in relationship management, which is to some extent a given because of the demand driven nature of UNOPS' work. Nonetheless, this still requires a solid engagement process and criteria for and prioritisation of which projects to engage in. This is guided by UNOPS Strategic Plan, aligned with Chief Executives Board principles for collaboration.

MI 5.1: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises that in view of the business model of UNOPS, beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders'; and intervention/ strategy are comparable to business strategy. The interpretation of 'beneficiary' for the assessment notes that UNOPS is accountable to the project commissioner - a country, another UN agency, a bilateral agency - and the accountability to beneficiaries' rest with the project commissioner, rather than with UNOPS, who is a service provider. Furthermore, with respect to country and regional priorities, UNOPS is guided by its strategic plan and guidance from governing bodies and being non programmatic does not have programmatic county and regional strategies. The assessment interprets this to capture the relevance and agility of engagement and activities of UNOPS rather than looking at strategies.

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 1: The organisation's country or regional strategies refer to national/regional body strategies or objectives.	**Element 1:** country and regional strategies are understood as UNOPS business plans and portfolio of projects.
Element 2: Reviewed interventions/strategies refer to the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations.	**Element 2:** UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders' in the broad sense.
Element 3: The organisation's country strategies or regional strategies link targeted results to national or regional goals.	**Element 3:** UNOPS' business strategies are consistent with national and regional goals.
Element 4: Structures and incentives in place for technical staff that allow them to invest time and effort in alignment process.	**Element 4:** Structures and incentives in place for technical personnel that allow them to invest time and effort in engagement process.

MI 5.2 The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises '*intervention*' is considered equivalent to a UNOPS '*operational project*' implemented on behalf of a partner. This micro-indicator was therefore assessed through the *operational project* lens.

MI 5.3 The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises UNOPS as a service provider, often using vendors to implement the project; thus, the focus shifts to both national partners in general and to vendors as implementing partners to UNOPS in terms of institutional capacity to complete a project.

MI 5.5 The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator makes minor adjustments to element 2 where *'evaluation'* is interpreted as '*project review'* (see KPI 8 for rationale here).

MI 5.6 The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises UNOPS is a service provider, without its own programmatic projects. UNOPS' responsibility and liability for the design of projects vary and is laid out in its Engagement Agreements, project agreement and project documents. For infrastructure projects for example, UNOPS accepts design liability only when certain conditions are met; for designs provided by a third party, the liability rests there. A design review is carried out to ensure compliance with UNOPS standards as contained in UNOPS Organisational Instructions and various design planning manuals, which currently cover infrastructure and have recently been extended to cover utilities including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, and waste management. Furthermore, as UNOPS operates on a results framework that goes to output only consideration of issues such as ensuring sustainability in intervention design reflect this. UNOPS applies a comprehensive sustainability framework to its work with three dimensions of sustainability and MI 5.6 is interpreted with this in mind.

Key Performance Indicator 6

As UNOPS is project-based and non-programmatic, assessment of this KPI was geared to capturing agility at engagement and project level.

MI 6.1: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator gears the assessment to engagement and projects**,** with minor adjustments made to Elements 1 and 2, as follows:

Standard MOPAN 3.1 formation	Assessment interpretation for UNOPS
Element 1: Procedures in place to encourage joint planning and programming.	**Element 1:** Procedures in place to encourage joint planning and programming as equivalent to engagement.
Element 2: Mechanisms, including budgetary, in place to allow programmatic changes and adjustments when conditions change.	**Element 2:** Mechanisms, including budgetary, in place to allow project changes and adjustments when conditions change.

MI 6.7: As noted above in KPI 5, MI 5.1 UNOPS is primarily accountable to the project commissioner - a country, another UN agency, a donor - and the accountability to beneficiaries rests there, rather than with UNOPS as a service provider to the commissioner. In the assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include *'stakeholders'.*

MI 6.9: This Micro indicator is considered not applicable (*N/A*) as UNOPS does not have a normative mandate that includes policy dialogue or advocacy. Nonetheless, UNOPS' strategic plan and corresponding annexes acknowledge the role of knowledge production and sharing in achieving its mandate, and a comment is included to this effect (but not scored).

Performance Area: Performance Management

Assessing KPIs 7 and 8 using the standardised framework is challenging, as UNOPS does not operate as many other more traditionally structured UN agencies or programmes do. Nonetheless, UNOPS has contemporary systems geared to managing and accounting for its results and uses performance information, including self-assessment. Lesson-learning systems and procedures are in place. These are based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model and seen through the lens of business intelligence and knowledge management rather than traditional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system design.

Key Performance Indicator 7

The assessment and interpretation of this key performance indicator recognises UNOPS' service provider mandate, and the fact that it's Executive Board and the Member States support the focus on output-level reporting. Whilst Results-Based Management (RBM) in a development context normally focuses on development results at the outcome and impact level, this KPI is interprets and assesses "results" at the output level only in line with the requirements and expectations of UNOPS' governing and oversight bodies.

MI 7.1: Given UNOPS' focus on output level report of the results chain, '*Leadership ensures application of an organisation-wide RBM approach*' is interpreted as effective delivery of the agreed output.

Key Performance Indicator 8

The assessment and interpretation of this key performance indicator recognises the application of evidence-based planning and programming serving both accountability and learning purposes and considered UNOPS' ability to generate evidence of performance and apply learning from it.

MIs 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3: The application of these micro-indicators presupposes the existence of an evaluation function and associated policy and structures often found in UN agencies. This structure does not exist in UNOPS, as agreed with the member states and governing bodies, and therefore are considered N/A.

MIs 8.4, 8.5, and 8.6: The assessment of these micro-indicators relate to organisational learning, an issue deeply engrained within UNOPS' approach to continuous improvement and at the core of the EFQM model. The assessment and interpretation of these micro-indicators interprets '*evaluations*' as '*assessment*' or '*evidence*'.

MI 8.7: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator recognises that, whilst UNOPS neither conducts nor commissions evaluations per se, it does actively create and maintain a knowledge base on project implement, including a knowledge management and sharing strategy, for lesson learning purposes.

Performance Area: Results

Key Performance Indicators 9-12

The assessment and interpretation of key performance indicators 9 – 12 are considered in light of the two key issues:

- the absence of independent evaluative documentation; and
- the business model where UNOPS contributes to programme outcomes in partnership with other entities and the achievements reported in the UNOPS Annual Report are measured and reported at the output level.

MI 9.1: The assessment and interpretation of this micro-indicator focuses on operational results linked to the contribution goals and documentary evidence is based on the understanding that UNOPS does not conduct independent evaluation and reports on achievements at the output level only.

MIs 9.3, 9.4: The assessment notes there is insufficient evidence to form a robust assessment judgement.

MI 10.1: As noted above in MI 5.1 and 6.7, UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders' given the demand driven business model with partners asking for and are willing to pay for UNOPS assistance based on an identified need, and therefore considered relevant.

KPI 11: The assessment and interpretation of this key performance indicator is geared to effective delivery of output consistent with treatment throughout the assessment.

KPI 12: The assessment and interpretation of this key performance indicator is linked to the treatment of MI 5.6 related to sustainability and consistently treated.

Lines of Evidence

Given the unique specificities and context of UNOPS, whilst two of the three standard lines of evidence were maintained, notably the document review and interviews with personnel, a deviation from the standard methodology through an adaptation of the partner survey data collection instrument was necessary. The rationale and application are described below.

- **Document review.** This comprised publicly-available documents published between July 2017 – December 2020 as well as guidelines and policies that are "current and in force". They were limited to those in final form (not draft versions), recognised by management, and available in English. The 104 documents reviewed for systematic analysis did not include evaluations and evaluation syntheses as noted above in the treatment of KPI 8 and KPIs 9-12.

  The Document Review examines key organisational documents to:

  - Explore whether multilateral organisations have the systems, practices, and/or behaviours in place that MOPAN considers to be important dimensions of organisational effectiveness, as reflected in the indicator framework.

  - Explore evidence of contributions to development, normative or humanitarian results (development/humanitarian effectiveness) drawing on a combination of evaluations, management results and other evidence, including reviews covering at least some of countries included in the partner survey.

  Prior to the inception mission over 120 documents were downloaded from UNOPS' website and the public domain for screening. Additional documents were identified during or immediately after the inception mission, and UNOPS provided the assessment team with access to them. These have been reviewed to select the 104 most relevant, and were used for the in-depth document review. A list is attached in Annex B. Further documents were identified under 'Reference Documents' which did not officially form part of the document review but were drawn upon to increase the team's understanding of the organisation. The assessment team also identified sight of UNOPS platforms as areas of interest available through UNOPS internal systems and structures rather than documentation per se.

  UNOPS is a well-documented organisation, consistent with the requirements inherent in the EFQM model, and the documents agreed for review provide coverage of all KPIs, with a caveat for KPIs requiring evaluative documents, for the reasons explained above. KPIs 9-12 on evaluation and results were assessed based on UNOPS' Sustainability Reports, the EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report and results information from the Management dashboards and scorecard.

  An interim document review, which summarises documentary evidence available against the indicator framework (MI/element) was shared, reviewed for fact-checking ahead of the headquarters interviews in mid-November and agreed by UNOPS and the MOPAN Secretariat.

- **Interviews and consultations.** Given the constraints imposed by COVID-19, inception interviews were conducted virtually over a two-week period (26th August to 4th September 2020); with the main data collection interviews over a further two-week period (23rd November – 4th December 2020) as follows:

  - For the inception phase, more than 25 interviews were conducted remotely
  - For the main data collection phase, headquarter interviews with all 8 senior leaders, and 42 consultations with personnel across the 4 pillars of organisational units. The assessment team met virtually the Executive Director and all Senior Leadership Team members including Pillar Directors, Department/Functional Directors and unit Leads, *inter alia*.
  - Country/regional level interviews with [10] mid- to senior-level personnel.

  During inception, the assessment team sought to understand the specific mandate of UNOPS, its operating model and architecture, how it addresses cross-cutting issues and interprets and tracks results and performance. This helped to inform and define how to best apply, adapt and interpret the MOPAN framework to capture the specificities, structures, and available evidence from UNOPS.

  Primarily, the inception meetings explored the operating context and strategic intent of UNOPS from their role perspective and enabled the team to gather information against the following:
  - The mandate and strategic objectives of UNOPS, including its specific main role and the scope of its operations
  - The current strategic plan, with a brief description and date of start / end
  - Any specific role/issue in relation to the 2030 Agenda, or as part of the UNDS reform
  - The governance of UNOPS
  - The scope/boundaries of UNOPS as regards the assessment, including the S3i
  - Finances, describing current status and recent trends of both the budgeting and the financial resources of the organisation
  - Key organisational reforms and organisational change/ improvement initiatives in progress
  - Potential topics for interest from an organisational performance perspective, e.g., key areas of commitments made to political level (QCPR, Executive Boards, Governing Bodies).

  In relation to COVID-19, the inception interviews explored the following:
  - UNOPS' COVID-19 response strategy and support activities
  - Emerging Partnerships and collaboration efforts
  - Structural ramifications (e.g., internal reform, new funding sources, etc.).

  Primarily, the main data collection semi-structured interviews were geared to:
  - Deepen and interrogate the evidence from the inception phase and document review.
  - Confirm, nuance or clarify trends/findings emerging from the document review.
  - Update on UNOPS's on-going reform agenda and any key changes since documentation was analysed.
  - Provide contextual insight to clarify, refute and/or validate observations emerging from other lines of evidence/data sources (e.g. document review, survey data).
  - Generate new evidence in areas where documentary and survey evidence are lacking
  - Seek out explanations and factors (asking why and how).

- **An online survey to members of the Executive Board** was issued. In agreement with UNOPS and the Secretariat, a limited survey instrument was deployed focusing on Executive Board representatives (36) to ensure this important perspective was not lost. Only 1 response was received.

- **UNOPS Partner Survey.** UNOPS agreed to make available to the assessment team, after clearing all data protection issues, data from their survey to be used as part of the final analysis and triangulation process in the assessment.

- **Partner Engagement.** In consultation with the MOPAN Secretariat and UNOPS, the assessment team concluded on the need to differentiate the approach for securing an external perspective into the assessment. The UNOPS MOPAN assessment required a deviation from standard methodology in view of UNOPS intention to launch their own partner survey in early 2021. The team noted UNOPS' concern regarding the deployment of the MOPAN partner survey at the same time and to some of the same respondents as the biannual UNOPS partner survey and the associated risk related to respondent burden; the detrimental impact of survey fatigue and the resultant risk of non-response bias impacting on the efficacy of both survey instruments. Secondary concerns were linked to the degree of overlap and duplication of the survey instruments, though following an analysis of the 2 survey instruments – both on duplication (between the 2 instruments) and relevance (of the generic MOPAN questions to UNOPS operating model, mandate and context) - it is noted that the scope and purpose of the partner surveys is somewhat different. In view of this, the MOPAN partner survey evidence stream was substituted with a combination of partner interviews at country level and use of UNOPS partner surveys. In all cases though, MOPAN is mindful not to place a disproportionate, or in other ways unreasonable, demand on MOs and their partners.

  Nonetheless, the importance of securing external perspectives into a MOPAN assessment remained central and it was concluded, in close consultation with UNOPS senior management, the MOPAN Secretariat and the assessment team, that UNOPS could provide a good case for piloting a different methodological approach. This alternative approach involved interviews with partners at country level instead of conducting the survey, and was to be seen as a pilot, thus providing insights to the MOPAN Secretariat on the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach.

  The assessment team considered purposive, partner interviews likely to yield a better and deeper understanding of partner perspectives given the unique specificities of UNOPS, whilst responding to the noted concern of UNOPS in terms of respondent burden and survey fatigue. Whilst this differentiation in approach was necessary, the sampling for country and regional evidence remained consistent across all evidence streams, as below.

  In order to substitute the country partners' survey instrument with a more detailed series of deep dive structured interviews, it was critical to balance the need to obtain credible, robust and meaningful data through robust data collection methods whilst being proportionate with available resources.

  Given UNOPS' five regions,[89] and six types of partners,[90] the assessment team undertook partner interviews at country level with the following assumptions:
  – 2 countries selected using the sampling frame below for each of UNOPS' regions;
  – 1 partner for each of UNOPS' partner types in each selected country, up to a maximum of 6 per country;

  Partner identification was based on the following primary criterion for selection:
  – Stable small island developing states;
  – Stable least developed countries;
  – Stable middle-income countries, as per the World Bank income group categories;
  – Fragile and post-crisis countries.

89 Africa; Asia; Europe and Central Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Middle East

90 UN and State Entities, including i) Governments, ii) UN, iii) Intergovernmental entities and iv) IFIs; and non-UN and non-State entities, including v) NGOs and vi) Academia/ Business/ Associations)

As secondary criteria, country selection considered regional diversity (based on UNOP's five regions), breadth of service line, and representation of UNOPS' priority partners:

- Representation of both office footprints, including identified top performing offices and non-performing offices;
- Representative of engagement across all UNOPS service lines, including number of projects;
- Representation across relevant SDGs;
- Includes sample of UNOPS top 10 priority global partners[91] and non-DAC Government partners[92] by Engagement Addition (EA in USD million).

Interviews were conducted in all regions, as intended though with lower numbers than anticipated, with a particularly limited number of countries especially in Asia and Africa. Coverage does however provide a diverse representation of country contexts and types of engagement, as well as a good sample of different types of partners; though given low numbers the assessment team also considered the 2021 UNOPS partner survey as an additional data point, for triangulation, alongside the partner interviews to mitigate potential response bias. There were 10 interviews conducted in Europe (out of 12 requested), 3 in Africa (out of 9 requested), 4 in Asia (out of 7 requested), 5 in Middle East (of 7 requested), and the two interviews requested in Latin America were both conducted. Partners in the following countries, were interviewed:

Table 5: Geographic spread of partner interviews

	Sum of interviews completed
Africa	**3**
Somalia	3
Asia	**4**
Myanmar	4
Europe	**10**
Georgia	5
Serbia	5
Latin America	**2**
Argentina	1
Mexico	1
Middle East	**5**
Iraq	1
Jordan	2
Yemen	2
Total	**24**

91 UN Secretariat; The World Bank; the European Commission; UNHCR; Qatar; UK; USA; Japan; Norway; The Global Fund

92 Guatemala, Argentina, Peru, Panama, Honduras, Ukraine, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Paraguay, Brazil

Of the UN and State entity partners, there was equal representation of national governments and donor governments (8 of each), and roughly equal of UN or IFI Peers (3 and 4 respectively), and of Non-UN and Non-State Entity partners, one NGO was interviewed. No partner was identified by UNOPS in the partners' category: Academia/ Business/ Associations.

Table 6: Partner interviews by type of partner

	Types of partner interviewed
Donor Government	8
International Financial Institution	4
National Government	8
NGO	1
UN	3
Total	**24**

Thus, in terms of the sample criteria, all primary criteria and secondary country criteria were met. The partner criteria both in terms of priority global partners and non-DAC government partners were also met. The individuals interviewed had varying levels of responsibility and degree of experience with UNOPS and the wider multilateral system as such. However, given the relatively low number of partner interviews, the use of UNOPS' 2021 Partner Survey was used to identify any points of convergence of difference with the findings from this evidence stream in order to mitigate response bias.

Discussions were held with the institutional lead of the UNOPS assessment (France and the US) as part of the analytical process. These served to gather insights on current priorities for the organisation from the perspective of MOPAN member countries.

General information about the sequence and details related to these evidence lines, the overall analysis, and scoring and rating process as applied to UNOPS can be found in the MOPAN 3.1 Methodology.

4.3. LIMITATIONS

The following table summarises limitations, potential impact, applied mitigation measures and residual risk remaining during the assessment inception, data collection and data analysis phase.

Table 7: Assessment risks and mitigations

Limitation	Potential Impact	Mitigation	Residual Risk after mitigation
The UNOPS business model has several unique characteristics for an organisation in the UN system: being a demand driven, self-financing and non-programmatic organisation has brought unique challenges to applying a standardised assessment framework.	**Medium** – due to risk of incomplete or superficial assessment affecting the validity of the assessment without adequate adaptation.	Extensive interpretation to the standardised assessment framework, through joint consultation with UNOPS and MOPAN Secretariat. As detailed in section 4.3, 22 interpretations were applied; 28 elements considered not applicable; and 8 elements not assessed due to insufficient evidence.	**Low**
Availability of evidence of results data limited primarily to management information; no independent evaluative evidence in relation to KPIs 9 – 12 available.	**High / Medium** – evidence confidence for KPIs 9 – 12 is mixed. This is due to a lack of definitive or comprehensive independent evidence	Use of available management information, including annual reports; reports on progress through UNOPS' Balanced Scorecard; and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).	**Medium**
Results reporting where UNOPS contributes to programme outcomes in partnership with other entities and the achievements reported in the UNOPS Annual Report are measured and reported at the output level.	**Medium** – results reporting primarily geared to output level reporting; whereas MOPAN assessments ordinarily look to assess achievement of results at outcome level and beyond.	Acknowledgement that UNOPS' highest governing body (the Executive Board) considers and endorses results reporting at output level sufficient.	**Low**
Lack of project documentation.	**Medium** – The practical implication is predominantly the weakening of the evidence confidence in KPIs 5 and 6, where 'intervention designs' form the backbone of numerous elements.	The assessment team noted to UNOPS that whilst we were given a large volume of project documents, all of these related to the same project (South Sudan Rural Renewable Energy Project). This lack of project documentation was flagged to UNOPS on 26 November 2020; though no further engagement-level documentation received. The assessment does not draw heavily on partnerships or project design for key findings, which mitigates this implication to some extent.	**Low**

Limitation	Potential Impact	Mitigation	Residual Risk after mitigation
Concurrent surveying of UNOPS partners, through the MOPAN partner survey instrument alongside the routine UNOPS partner survey.	**Medium** – potential risk of survey respondent burden; the detrimental impact of survey fatigue and the resultant risk of non-response bias impacting on the efficacy of both survey instruments.	The MOPAN partner survey data collection was successfully substituted with partner interviews as detailed in section 4.3 above; noting the assessment team's consideration of the 2021 UNOPS partner survey as an additional data point, for triangulation.	**Low**
Partner availability due to the timing of this phase of data collection was challenging, due to the Christmas holidays.	**Medium** – potential risk of not sufficiently representing the voice from partners.	The assessment team extended the window for partner interviewing by 4 weeks, allowing for higher levels of engagement. The assessment team also considered the 2021 UNOPS partner survey as an additional data point, for triangulation; though the finalised report was not available during early stages of drafting the IAR.	**Medium**
Low response rate from Executive Board members to MOPAN survey.	**Medium** – potential risk of not securing sufficient perceptions and insights from Executive Board members.	MOPAN Secretariat conducted the survey administration and management, including issuing the invitation and follow-up to encourage responses. Detailed engagement with Institutional Leads.	**High** – only 1 response was received from the Executive Board members, so this stakeholder group is underrepresented in the assessment findings.

ANNEXES

Annex A. Performance ratings and analysis table

METHODOLOGY FOR SCORING AND RATING

The approach to scoring and rating under MOPAN 3.1 is described in the 2020 Methodology Manual[93], which can be found on MOPAN's website.

Each of the 12 key performance indicators (KPIs) contains a number of micro-indicators (MIs), which vary in number. The KPI rating is calculated by taking the average of the ratings of its constituent MIs.

Scoring of KPIs 1-8

The scoring of KPIs 1-8 are based upon aggregated scoring of MIs which each contain a number of elements, which vary in number, that represent international good practice. Taking the average of the constituent scores per element, a score is then calculated per MI. The same logic is pursued at aggregation to the KPI level, to ensure a consistent approach. Taking the average of the constituent scores per MI, an aggregated score is then calculated per KPI.

Scoring of KPIs 9-12

The scoring of KPIs 9-12 is based upon a meta-analysis of evaluations and performance information, rated at the MI level and aggregated to the KPI level. For KPI 9, results against the mandate and contribution to cross-cutting results are given equal weight. KPIs 9-12 assess results achieved as assessed in evaluations and annual performance reporting from the organisations.

Rating scales

Whenever scores are aggregated, rating scales are used to translate scores into ratings that summarise the assessment across KPIs and MIs. The rating scale used under MOPAN 3.1 is shown below.

- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly Unsatisfactory** (0.00-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not applicable**

- **High evidence confidence**
- **Medium evidence confidence**
- **Low evidence confidence**

A score of "N/E" means "no evidence" and indicates that the assessment team could not find any evidence but was not confident of whether or not there was evidence to be found. The team assumes that "no evidence" does not necessarily mean that the element is not present (which would result in a zero score).

Elements rated N/E are excluded from any calculation of the average. A significant number of N/E scores in a report indicates an assessment limitation (see the Limitations section at the beginning of the report). A note indicating "N/A" means that an element is considered to be "not applicable". This usually owes to the organisation's specific nature.

Interpretations

Annexes contain text that has been adapted. Interpretations of elements in KPIs and MIs are indicated in underlined, italicised font.

93 MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, http://www.mopanonline.org/ourwork/themopanapproach/MOPAN_3.1_Methodology.pdf

UNOPS SCORING OVERVIEW

Strategic management

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework

- 1.1 Long-term vision
- 1.2 Organisational architecture
- 1.3 Supports normative frameworks
- 1.4 Financial framework

KPI 2: Cross-cutting issues

- 2.1 Gender
- 2.2 Environment
- 2.3 Good governance

Operational management

KPI 3: Resources support, relevance and agility

- 3.1 Resources aligned to functions
- 3.2 Resource mobilisation
- 3.3 Decentralised decision-making
- 3.4 Performance-based human resources

KPI 4: Cost and value consciousness, financial transparency

- 4.1 Translarent decision-making
- 4.2 Disbursement as planned
- 4.3 Results-based budgeting
- 4.4 Audit
- 4.5 Control mechanisms
- 4.6 Anti-fraud procedures
- 4.7 SEA prevention / response
- 4.8 SH prevention / response

Relationship management

KPI 5: Planning / intervention design support, relevance and agility

- 5.1 Alignment to country
- 5.2 Context analysis
- 5.3 Capacity analysis
- 5.4 Risk management
- 5.5 Cross-cutting issues in intervention design
- 5.6 Sustainability
- 5.7 Implementation speed

KPI 6: Work in coherent partnerships

- 6.1 Agility
- 6.2 Comparative advantage
- 6.3 Use country systems
- 6.4 Synergies
- 6.5 Co-ordination
- 6.6 Information sharing
- 6.7 Accountability to beneficiaries
- 6.8 Joint assessments
- 6.9 Knowledge

Performance management

KPI 7: Transparent results focus, explicitly geared to function

- 7.1 RBM applied
- 7.2 RBM in strategies
- 7.3 Evidence-based targets
- 7.4 Effective monitoring systems
- 7.5 Performance data applied

KPI 8: Evidence-based planning and programming applied

- 8.1 Independent evaluation function
- 8.2 Evaluation coverage
- 8.3 Evaluation quality
- 8.4 Evidence-based design
- 8.5 Poor performance tracked
- 8.6 Follow-up systems
- 8.7 Uptake of lessons

Results

KPI 9: Achievement of results

- 9.1 Achieves objectives
- 9.2 Gender equality / empowerment
- 9.3 Environmental sustainability
- 9.4 Human rights

KPI 10: Relevance to partners

- 10.1 Interventions relevant to needs

KPI 11: Results delivered efficiently

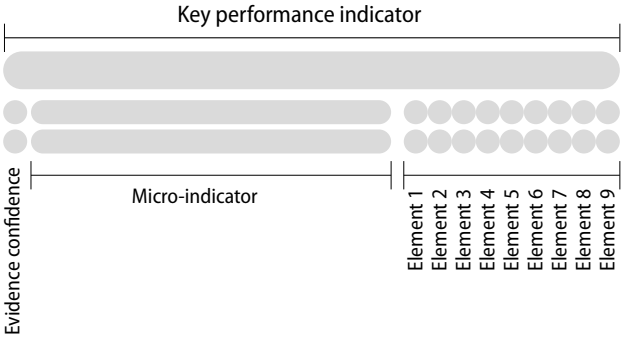
- 11.1 Results are cost-efficient
- 11.2 Results achieved on time

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

- 12.1 Benefits likely to continue

High confidence
Medium confidence
Little to no confidence

Highly satisfactory
Satisfactory
Unsatisfactory
Highly unsatisfactory
No evidence/Not applicable



PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS TABLE

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results	KPI score
Satisfactory	**3.31**

The Strategic Plan 2018-21, endorsed by the Executive Board and publicly available, frames UNOPS strategic direction and clearly lays out mission and vision.

A self-assessed mid-term review was conducted in 2020 confirming the relevance of the strategic direction and the viability of UNOPS demand driven, self-financing, and non-programmatic business model and its priorities and goals. UNOPS derives a great deal of its comparative advantage from this business model, unique in the UN system, and which positions UNOPS well to meet its ambition of becoming "a better known and recognised resource for Member States and the Secretary-General" (Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, pgs. 2,21); consistent with its service provider mandate.

UNOPS value proposition and intended results are conceptualised around two sets of goals: contribution goals and management goals, the latter with clear targets, assigning responsibility for results. Whilst recognising that the two sets of goals are mutually reinforcing, a clear articulation of the link between these is not spelled out in the Strategic Plan, nor the MTR.

UNOPS' global, organisational architecture and structure have been refined in recent years to ensure delivery of the Strategic Plan and work activities contributing to it. Effectiveness of the operating model requires a certain flexibility in terms of the architecture, achieved through careful planning and continuous assessment of UNOPS' operational footprint.

UNOPS' Strategic Plan is aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, yet UNOPS does not publish a consolidated organisational perspective of SDG related data on its own platforms. Nonetheless, it does complete the QCPR survey and provide examples of correlation between global needs and UNOPS activities in its annual report.

Unlike UN organisations with programmatic activities, which are financed predominantly through core and non-core contributions, UNOPS services are provided in exchange for coverage of the direct cost, plus a management 'fee for service' covering immediate and potential future indirect costs. (Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, pgs. 2,18) A clear biennial budgetary framework and rigorous budgetary process ensure that all priority areas have adequate funding and UNOPS has a sufficient level of reserves, the latter being an issue of discussion, given an intention to accept larger volumes of engagement (for example, the recent large-scale project in Mexico), with corresponding increase in risks. The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies. UNOPS' speedy and effective reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic is testimonial to the flexibility and agility of the Organisation.

MI 1.1 Strategic plan and intended results based on a clear long-term vision and analysis of comparative advantage in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: A publicly available strategic plan (or equivalent) contains a long-term vision	4
Element 2: The vision is based on a clear analysis and articulation of comparative advantage	4
Element 3: The strategic plan operationalises the vision and defines intended results	2
Element 4: The strategic plan is reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance and attention to risks	4

MI 1.1 Analysis	Source documents
The UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021 is publicly available on the organisation's website. It is focused on 'implementation for impact' and centred around the articulated vision and mission: "*Our vision is a world where people can live full lives, supported by appropriate, sustainable and resilient infrastructure and by efficient and transparent use of public resources in procurement and project management. Our mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development*" (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p8). The vision is based on UNOPS' key areas of expertise, as mandated by the Executive Board: procurement, infrastructure and project management, including provision of implementation, transactional and advisory services. (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes: p3). The Strategic Plan states the organisation's ambition is *"to become a known and recognised resource providing collaborative advantages that expand implementation capacity for Governments, the United Nations, and other partners, in support of the Secretary-General and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".* It recognises UNOPS' comparative advantage in procurement, infrastructure and project management, including provision of implementation, transactional and management advisory services. (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p1). With this in mind, the strategy notes the organisation is "*…ready to take on its share of responsibility, leveraging its presence and expertise in mandated areas, acting as a catalyst for channelling government and private-sector funding, and deploying its specialised technical expertise to support the 2030 Agenda...*" (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p8). The organisation's new slogan that was referred to by some personnel at HQ is "build the future". Personnel interviews further demonstrated a high degree of consistency in conveying UNOPS' comparative advantage, particularly evident in HQ personnel working on partnerships; and in regional and country offices where an ability to clearly articulate the value add of UNOPS is critical. UNOPS' main comparative advantage according to partner interviews is its strengths in procurement and project implementation; the organisation is subject to 'stringent and robust procedures and standards' and can act 'quickly and competently'. Others referred to the efficient project management and good reputation; being part of the UN system offers an additional layer of credibility, yet unlike some UN agencies, UNOPS has a 'low profile' and low visibility in projects. Rather than setting out clearly-defined results pathways from approach and comparative advantage to the achievement of its vision, the UNOPS strategic plan is focused around a 'management approach'. It outlines how the organisation will build on its excellence in delivering quality by refining the services and solutions offered in order to be more innovative and sustainable, seeking collaborative strategic partnerships to make the value proposition better known. It does this through articulating three contribution goals and four management goals which *"express its strategic aspirations for operational and management results."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, pp.8-9). The contribution goals *"express the overall value proposition for UNOPS services and frame how it will provide a focused, differentiated account of the direct and indirect value it adds."* They are: a) Enable partners to do more with less through efficient management support services, delivered locally or as global shared services. b) Help people achieve individual, local, national and global objectives, through effective specialised technical expertise grounded in international norms and standards. c) Support countries in expanding the pool and effect of resources available to achieve the 2030 Agenda.	1-5, 31, 42, 52

The management goals *"express the ambition for organisational excellence, quality and principled performance throughout UNOPS operations. They frame how it will drive its internal management reform and innovation agenda".* They are as follows: a) Partner value – deliver innovative services and solutions contributing value recognised by partners and in accordance with international standards and recognised best practices. b) People excellence – empower people to perform at consistently high standards in a culture conducive to principled performance, making UNOPS an employer of choice, attracting and retaining a talented workforce. c) Process excellence – drive measurable improvement of quality, efficiency and reliability of operations through simplification and innovation of processes, based on clear standards and delegated authority enabled through information technology. d) Financial stewardship – safeguard the demand driven, self-financed business model and ability to invest in innovation for the benefit of governments, the United Nations and other partners, and the people they serve. Annex II of the Strategic Plan, which outlines UNOPS' aspirations, states that *"The UNOPS contribution goals state the overall value proposition for its mandated project services, namely, what it can contribute towards the 2030 Agenda, including towards countries' achievement of the goals"* (p8), however, these contribution aspirations are not operationalised beyond the management goals, which express operational approaches and standards, rather than intended results. Whilst the presentation on the website highlights "Implementation for impact", the results framework in the strategic plan does not go to the level of impact as intended results are defined only in terms of output. lays out the requirement for a midterm review to be conducted after the first two years of the planning period (OD Strategy Setting, Feb 2018, p5) and the PPM guidelines explain that this is to ensure continued alignment to development objectives and adaptation to changes in context (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p79). A mid-term review of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan was conducted as planned which reconfirmed the direction set through the strategic framework, finding that it is providing for the continued growth of UNOPS support to countries' achievement of the SDGs in different sectors and operational contexts. It also confirms the relevance of the strategic direction and value proposition for efficiencies, effectiveness, and expanding the pool of resources, and confirmed the relevance of the three contribution goals (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p73). Regarding risk, the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, *committed to "longer-term planning based on internal and external business intelligence including data from the evolving discourse on country risks and fragility".* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). UNOPS used this approach to focus its activities in developing its 2018-2021 global business plan, and the Midterm review assessment also *"…reconfirmed strong correlations between UNOPS in-country activities and the challenges people face in different countries and contexts; and that the majority of its in-country activities are concentrated in countries ranking low on the human development index and high on the humanitarian risk index…"* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes).	1-5, 42
MI 1.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.2: Organisational architecture congruent with a clear long-term vision and associated operating model	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: The organisational architecture is congruent with the strategic plan	4
Element 2: The operating model supports implementation of the strategic plan	4
Element 3: The operating model is reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance	3
Element 4: The operating model allows for strong co-operation across the organisation	4
Element 5: The operating model clearly delineates responsibilities for results	2
MI 1.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS' global, organisational architecture and structure have been refined in recent years to ensure delivery of the strategic plan and is now structured according to two main types of organisational entities: 'Geographical' and 'Functional'. Geographic entities (Regions and countries) are the "operational" entities and report to the Director of Regional Portfolios and are designed to deliver local portfolios in a designated geographical area., Geographical regions often manage several country and multi-country offices, which may also be organised in country or local project offices. Functional entities on the other hand (e.g. HQ groups) complement the geographically set structure, reporting to either the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director. The functional entities have a global remit through either standard setting, policy and control (cost centre functions), supporting operations (cost recovery centre functions) or providing assurance (cost centre functions). (EOI Organisational Structure). According to the SP: "*All global projects are organised in service clusters embedded within one structure. This permits management oversight, co-ordination, and integration of in-country operations".* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p12). This structure is mirrored in the budget structure where the geographical offices often have revenue centre functions, and the functional are cost-centres (EOI Organisational Structure). The EFQM report acknowledges that UNOPS' set up comprising operational hubs, operational centres and project centres with a sizeable and flexible delivery *"reflect the agile approach of UNOPS"* and that headquarters support help *"drive operations more effectively and efficiently".* (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p21). Since UNOPS is entirely self-financing, *"A global shared services centre model facilitates the provision of internal support services on a cost-recovery basis."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p12). UNOPS' 'non-programmatic implementation mandate' is unique in the United Nations system. UNOPS' strategic plan reflects this role as a 'project-based organisation', focusing on its operating model to support the delivery of projects on behalf of its partners, helping them to achieve their own mandates (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p22; JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p48). This mandated strategic approach is supported by UNPOPS' demand driven, self-financing, operating model, which *"promotes lean, efficient delivery, and the flexible structure and global reach means that UNOPS can quickly respond to partner needs, whilst realising economies of scale. UNOPS also tailors support to the needs of its partners, offering expert advice or managing entire projects or programmes."* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p3). The organisation's value proposition is therefore *"grounded in its flexible, modular project services…"* There are five service lines: infrastructure, procurement, project management, financial	1, 3-16

management and human resources. Across the five service lines, the value proposition spans three types of services: implementation, transactional and advisory. (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p10). Other specialised delivery modalities *such as global shared services and secretariat services for international initiatives have also been developed.* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p10).

Whilst UNOPS overarching service-provision operating model is set by mandate, and therefore not subject to review, GRI reporting (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p17) and the JIU review both provide evidence that UNOPS continuously review and revise their management model and structure to ensure its relevance, given the demand driven and self-financed nature and consequent need "*for flexibility in response to strategic impulses and business imperatives"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p28).

The COVID-19 pandemic and consequent country response restrictions *"created heavy operational constraints, temporarily affecting [UNOPS'] ability to operate in several project locations globally".* (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020, p9). In response to the pandemic, The Senior Leadership Team of UNOPS set up a Global Task Force (GTF) on 25th March 2020 in response to COVID-19 to provide "*first line, dedicated support to business units in the implementation of new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, in order to maximise the impact that UNOPS can provide whilst protecting its interests"* (UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19, 2020). The GTF convened personnel across regions and HQ, reporting to the Shared Services Centre (SSC), to focus exclusively on new and current projects related to COVID-19 with responsibility for three streams of work: project engagement, project finance and procurement and supply chain. Establishment of such a task force has facilitated COVID-19 response, whilst also ensuring other HQ groups can continue to support the organisation on 'business as usual' activities. An End Stage Report of the first phase of the GTF summarises that it *"sought to anticipate field teams' needs by pulling in practices around the organisation to deliver the right people, tools, and support needed to respond to the crisis"* (End Stage Report of the COVID-19 Response Global Task Force, 2020).

1, 3-16

UNOPS' operating model facilitates strong cooperation across the organisation. According to the Strategic Plan, UNOPS has three main forums for institutional co-ordination*:* the Senior Leadership Group, which meets weekly, to advise on short-term operational and strategic issues; the Corporate Operations Group, which meets monthly, to advise on strategic issues for the medium and longer-term; and a larger global leadership meeting

that is convened annually to develop collective means to operationalise medium- and longer-term strategic priorities (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p13). The recent JIU review considered the latter as a good networking opportunity and way to reinforce connections between HQ and the field. (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p25).

The assessment team notes that in 2019 a new global structure was established by the Executive Director with a 'Senior Leadership Team' comprising the Executive Director and the directors of the organisation's four functional pillars, and the Chief Executive of the Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment Office replaced the Corporate Operations and Senior Leadership Groups (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). The intention is that this new team "*enables executive leadership to develop clear, coherent positions on the strategic direction and institutional initiatives of UNOPS".* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, p14) i.e., stronger cooperation across the organisation. This is discussed further under MI 3.1.

The JIU review suggested that UNOPS management and other committees provide an effective framework to facilitate informed decision-making by the executive management and adequate

overall management of the organisation, however in light of the decentralised structure, it also notes there to be a possible disconnect between HQ and field entities (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p30). The operating model, non-programmatic mandate and associated ways of working, are universally understood by UNOPS personnel, as evidenced in personnel interviews. A shared service centre (Bangkok Shared Service Centre) was operationalised in 2014 and offers services in the areas of human resources, finance and accounting (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p37) which also contributes to stronger cooperation across the organisation. In terms of responsibility for results, instead of dedicated strategies and results frameworks for each operational unit, targeting a discrete facet of UNOPS objectives, the strategic plan and its results framework is used by all UNOPS organisational entities to manage their respective portfolios. Organisational strategic objectives and ambitions are cascaded down from the Executive Office to each Region and then to other country offices both of which identify how they plan to meet or contribute to them in their respective business plans. Then these are cascaded down to sub-portfolios, programmes and projects (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p58). The result of this is that each business unit contributes to the headline organisational financial performance and service provision, rather than having clear linkages to contribution goals, or other – bounded and non-financial – management objectives. Document review and interviews conducted provided evidence that business plans and target agreement reports exist for UNOPS's various regions. Quarterly Business reviews were introduced in 2017 whereby senior managers review performance against agreed targets and identify any corrective actions as necessary." (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p17).	1, 3-16
MI 1.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.3: Strategic plan supports the implementation of global commitments and associated results	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.67**
Element 1: The strategic plan is aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, wider normative frameworks and their results (including, for example, the Grand Bargain and the QCPR)	4
Element 2: A system is being applied to track normative results for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and other relevant global commitments (for example, the QCPR and the Grand Bargain, where applicable)	2
Element 3: Progress on implementation and aggregated results against global commitments are published at least annually	2
MI 1.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
The 2018-2022 strategic plan is aligned to the 2030 Agenda and other normative frameworks and management reforms of the UN such as the QCPR, the Secretary-General's vision for the United Nations system, and has key priorities for making the United Nations system more effective and responsive for supporting Member States' objectives of achieving peace and sustainable development. (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p47; (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p15). UNOPS' services and offerings therefore support the mandates and goals of their partners within the context of its demand driven,	

implementation mandate. The current Strategic Plan underlines that UNOPS can make direct and indirect contributions towards achievement of all the SDGs. (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p6). During 2015-2016, 79 per cent of activities gravitated towards, Goal 3 (good health and wellbeing), Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong institutions), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and Goal 13 (climate action). (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p12) UNOPS indicated in the 2019 QCPR survey that the planning and budgetary cycle is fully aligned with the QCPR cycle (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p14) and answered 'yes' to the question *"Has your entity reported to its governing body on actions taken to implement the 2016 QCPR resolution (A/RES/71/243/)"*. In the strategic plan, 2018-2021 UNOPS emphasised its commitment to "continue to engage with its United Nations partners for joint strategic initiatives and realisation of collaborative advantages, noting the 'common approach' agreed between UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women" (DP/OPS/2017/5 paragraph 96). UNOPS has, and does, work in partnership with the programmatic entities that in 2017 developed the common chapter. A high level summary of contributions to reform efforts was most recently provided in the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2018-2021 (DP/OPS/2020/5 paragraphs 123 and 124).	
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and reported on using a results-based management approach. (Project Management Manual Part 1: Guidelines). Reflecting this, the recent JIU review found that UNOPS does not have a substantive mandate for global normative policy, and whilst UNOPS submits SDG related, high level data to the Chair of the Executive Board annually, the 2019 QCPR survey indicated that the organisation does not publish SDG related data on its own platforms (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p10) (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p55). In response to the 2019 QCPR survey, UNOPS indicate that they have a concrete approach to reaching the furthest behind, specifically in conflict/post conflict countries, least developed countries and others in 'vulnerable situations', and note that the 2018 Annual Report, for example, highlights instances where UNOPS actions have contributed to reaching the furthest behind in fragile situations such as Yemen, Gaza, Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, Syria and South Sudan. The 2020 Annual report states "UNOPS supported progress towards achieving a number of global and local objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals. As in previous years, there was considerable demand for support related to Goals 3, 9, 11, and 16. UNOPS provided expertise through a range of integrated services across multiple sectors and service lines" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020) and provides examples of what has been done in various countries and contexts but does not make specific links back to specific SDGs.	1, 3, 7-8, 13, 17-18
MI 1.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.4: Financial framework supports mandate implementation ***Interpretation: The assessment aims to capture the specificity and key elements of the self-financing model of UNOPS, where revenue is generated from management fees and cost recovery and no resources are mobilised from donors.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.67**
Element 1: Financial and budgetary planning ensures that all priority areas have adequate funding and reserves in the short-term or are at least given clear priority in cases where funding is very limited	3
Element 2: A clear budgetary framework ensures transparency on both management expenditures and revenue	4
Element 3: The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies	4
Element 4: Funding windows or other incentives in place to encourage donors to provide more flexible/un-earmarked funding at global and country levels	N/A
Element 5: Policies/measures are in place to ensure that earmarked funds are targeted at priority areas	N/A
Element 6: [UN] Funding modalities with UN reform: 15% of total resources are from pooled funding	N/A
MI 1.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS is entirely self-financed and does not receive any assessed or voluntary (core/non-core) contributions (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020 (UNOPS). In light of this, and against the demand driven, project-based operating model, *"sufficient income needs to be generated from service delivery to cover administrative costs and maintain an operational reserve"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p12) to ensure long-term viability. As such, financial regulations stipulate that the budget shall cover anticipated revenue and intended costs. Therefore, UNOPS does not plan for an operating loss in any year, and instead plans for a net revenue target of zero	2, 8, 10, 14, 19-25, 102

or above. UNOPS does not have the possibility of accessing credit or adopting a programmatic approach to funds application between projects, and must act within the boundaries of its contractual obligations as a project service provider (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020, p2**).** Regarding reserves, a minimum operational reserve dynamic was approved by the Executive Board in 2013, in accordance with recognised best practice (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020, p9), set at four months of the average of the previous three years' expense under its management budget (Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2013, 2013, p42). Decisions to draw from these reserves rests with the Executive Director. At the end of 2019, the organisation reported having "*continued to maintain its operational reserve above the minimum requirement established by its Executive Board"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content, p10). Income is generated through fees; partners who procure services from UNOPS pay a fee to cover for UNOPS indirect cost in addition to reimbursing the direct cost of the project and UNOPS operates on a full cost-recovery model. Indirect costs can be charged as absolute amounts or as a percentage of project costs. The financial regulations (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020) provide the methodology for determining the management fee and the cost recovery principles. UNOPS has a 'Value Proposition and Cost Recovery Model' which stipulates: *"Direct costs should be clearly documented, identifiable, and directly pertain to the activities carried out to deliver the benefits to a particular engagement agreement or client(s)"* (OD Value Proposition and Cost Recovery Model, 2018). Despite this formal process for making costs clear and transparent, partner interviews revealed a mixed response regarding understanding of UNOPS' fee and cost recovery model with some indicating they do not know sufficient detail about the model and that fees and the cost recovery model are not fully transparent, whilst others felt that costs were both transparent and fair. However, this doesn't necessarily reflect a transparency issue, so much as a communication and perceptions issue. The organisation notes this, and reflected in the 2019 Q4 Quarterly Business Review (QBR) that the inability to transparently explain the pricing policy carries the risk of it being perceived as expensive and non-transparent by stakeholders. However, assessment in Q2 in 2020 was that this risk was declining. Personnel interviews universally demonstrated a clear understanding of the self-financing, project-based operating model and the way UNOPS has to operate to ensure financial sustainability and health. Interviews demonstrated a clear emphasis on the principles of financial sustainability and health, with many citing the historic financial situation of UNOPS as a driver for continued vigilance. Six annual targets guide the financial performance of UNOPS, capturing revenue and expenses as well as cost recovery, and are reported on a quarterly basis. These are net engagement revenue, engagement revenue addition, management expense, net revenue, centrally managed cost recovery balance, and locally managed cost recovery balance. Two key indicators in Balanced scorecard track important aspects of the financial model: one is the proportion of management fees collected reinvested, which was in 2018 and 2019 4% and 2% respectively against a target of 10% for 2018-2019; the other is proportion of new and extended partner agreements that are in compliance with cost recovery policy. In 2019 this was 99%, above the 95% target. The cost recovery is also closely monitored through regular reporting in the Quarterly Business Review, by centrally and locally managed direct costs respectively, and disaggregated by unit. Rather than participating in the structured funding dialogue with the Executive Board shared with UNDP and UNFPA, UNOPS instead presents its Biennial Budget to the Board (UNOPS response to QCPR survey). There is evidence that Governing bodies review the financial framework as it is presented, alongside provisions and plans for contingencies, upon request to the Executive Board during annual and regular session through their 'Net assets' document. (Decisions adopted by the	2, 8, 10, 14, 19-25, 102

Executive Board at its annual session 2020) (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020, p2). Annual updates on UNOPS net assets management and plans are also provided to the Executive Board through the annual report of the Executive Director (UNOPS Net Assets, June 2020, p2). Financial and budgetary planning processes take place on a two-year cycle, overseen by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019, p1). Some interviewees considered that UNOPS cross-cutting priorities are sometimes under resourced at the project level.	2, 8, 10, 14, 19-25, 102
MI 1.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms in place and applied to support the implementation of global frameworks for crosscutting issues at all levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**2.78**

Structures and mechanisms to support the implementation of global frameworks for crosscutting issues are strongest in the area of gender and less strong on human rights, however it is important to note that much of UNOPS demand and work is from UN agencies, OECD/ DAC countries and other partners (totalling 72.3% i.e. just under three quarters). Given the mandates and commitments of these to cross-cutting issues, this should be reflected in UNOPS implemented projects by proxy.

UNOPS has a dedicated policy on gender equality, covering both internal and external dimensions. Internal gender indicators are regularly tracked and reported to the senior level team, and on external accountability systems including UN-SWAP. Gender Action Plans are routinely tracked and monitored, these are currently mandatory for Category 1 projects that do not include grants, however they can be explicitly excluded in the legal agreement. Gender screening is mandatory in projects. Resources are limited and whilst dedicated Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Specialists/focal points are present in some instance, the role is voluntary and supported by a pool of advisers/ experts. Personnel capacity development on gender is being or has been conducted (e.g., *I Know Gender*).

UNOPS has a Sustainable Procurement team, but there is no dedicated policy for environment and climate change. Some issues are covered through an Occupational Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management (HSSE) policy which brings more of a practitioner/ implementation-based lens, is risk driven, and currently perceived by personnel as primarily a 'check-box' (e.g., vendor self-assessment). A limited number of environmental sustainability and climate change indicators are included in the balanced scorecard and populated as of last year, confirming the intention to improve in this area. Personnel interviewed were consistently aware and have undertaken the training; though limited human and financial resources for this were available.

There is no dedicated policy on human rights and protection of vulnerable people, however, issues are to some extent covered through the HSSE and gender policies and included in the vendor self-assessment. The balanced scorecard has one indicator, tracked as of last year and covering compliance with minimum requirements on HSSE, though there is more comprehensive reporting captured in GRI. As for the other cross-cutting issues, there are limited human and financial resources, but personnel interviewed are consistently aware and having undertaken the training on implementing the social and environmental screening.

A Social and Environmental screening is mandatory for all Category 2 and 3 projects (those considered medium-high risk and presenting medium-high project management requirements).

MI 2.1 Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on gender equality available and showing evidence of application	4
Element 2: Gender equality indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	2
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect gender equality indicators and targets	4
Element 4: Gender equality screening checklists or similar tools inform the design for all new interventions	4
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address gender equality issues	2
Element 6: Staff capacity development on gender is being or has been conducted	4
MI 2.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2018) includes a policy statement on gender equality; *"Gender equality is a fundamental human right, necessary for our efforts to create a sustainable and resilient future…Enhancing gender equality by mainstreaming gender in UNOPS projects provides a real opportunity to address these challenges"* (Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, 2018, pp.7-8). This is operationalised through a gender mainstreaming action plan. Reporting within the organisation's Quarterly Business Review indicates mixed compliance with the action plan, whilst 100% of *"new engagements comply … with gender screening / GAP requirements"*, Gender Action Plans are only available for 54% of *'sample engagements'* [reflecting existing projects] (Quarterly Business Review 2020 Q2, p19). Gender percolates through UNOPS' 2018-21 Strategic Plan; through its sustainable implementation approaches which are aimed at providing *"opportunities for women- and youth-owned businesses […] advancing gender equality and empowerment of women and girls throughout implementation projects"* (p4), adherence to the UN Charter (p5), and technical expertise in gender-sensitive implementation (p16). Gender considerations are included in the organisation's strategic-level management objectives, as monitored through the balanced scorecard. However, only three out of forty-seven performance indicators directly address gender, of which two are internal corporate gender equality targets for personnel, and one relates to capacity building for suppliers *"with a particular focus on traditionally disadvantaged populations (i.e., women…"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director, 2020, Annex II, p6). The Quarterly Business Reviews report on gender action plan compliance. UNOPS also has several frameworks and systems for tracking performance against gender equality and mainstreaming targets. Foremost, UNOPS Annual Reporting, in addition to reporting on personnel equality performance, maintains a gender perspective throughout. It both disaggregates output data by gender (e.g., number of days of employment created and awards of tenders) and includes outcomes for women in project examples. This draws on an annual GRI sustainability report; UNOPS main avenue for reporting the sustainability of its practices and operations. The GRI report collates evidence of sustainability performance across twenty 'material topics', one of which is *"Gender and diversity in projects."* The GRI reporting does not include targets, however.	1, 3-4, 9, 26-31, 38

There are four further mechanisms through which UNOPS tracks and reports on progress on gender equality:

- Through an assessment against UNOPS criteria for successful projects, which include 'enhanced gender equality.' However, whilst the project success criteria are referenced in the Project Management Manual Pt. II as part of three steps; *report engagement status*, *complete project quarterly assurance*, and *manage project*, there is no explicit guidance on how they should be reported on.
- Through the Gender Action Plan itself, which contains outcomes, actions, and target dates required to implement the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.
- Self-reporting against seventeen UN-SWAP indicators.
- Against UNOPS' Framework for Sustainable Implementation Approaches, which includes indicators, baselines, and ambitions, and used as part of the midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan.

At a project intervention level, a gender screening is mandatory for all projects, at a minimum to identify whether gender mainstreaming considerations are applicable. Where applicable, projects must undertake a gender analysis, followed by the preparation of a gender action plan (GAP). As noted above, the Quarterly Business Review for Q2 of 2020 indicates that 100% (42 out of 42) new engagements comply with gender screening/Gender Action Plan Compliance and 54% (32 out of 59) Gender Action Plans are available in the system for sample engagements (>USD 2.5 million) (Quarterly Business Review 2020 Q2, p19).

Some personnel interviewed noted a perception that UNOPS has a flexible and strong system, albeit one that needs additional resources. Whilst there are mechanisms for financing UNOPS' gender screening, analysis, and action plan procedures for interventions, few of these are through human or financial resources provided by UNOPS itself but provided by partners. Whilst it is the ambition that every project should include a budget for a Gender Action Plan and monitoring plan, it is both optional, and the responsibility of the project to secure funding for a gender specialist, with personnel interview evidence indicating that this has not been possible for some projects. No evidence was available to the assessment team to indicate that the proportion of projects with a dedicated budget for a GAP or gender specialist is tracked.

To support small projects, however, IPMG have developed a '*Gender and Social Inclusion Specialists and Advisors retainer pool*' of experts who can be brought in to provide short-term services. UNOPS have instituted Gender Focal Points at country level and within Business Units at HQ to support gender mainstreaming, brought together as a network, supported by a Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Specialist. However, whilst the Coordinator position is funded by IPMG, the focal point role is voluntary. Moreover, the role is not part of personnel terms of reference or end-of-year assessments and is thus a perception evidenced in personnel interviews that it is seen as under-recognised internally. In addition to the workload that this creates, gender focal points may also not be gender experts, and can thus be limited in the support they can provide project teams.

There are early instances of country and regional offices bringing in dedicated gender mainstreaming and social inclusion specialists, with evidence from personnel interviews noting this as successful where it has taken place. However, UNOPS operating model is seen as a barrier to rolling out this model, as its demand driven nature means that offices must be able to, and do, expand and contract based on demand.

Mandatory training exists as part of personnel capacity development on gender. Personnel interviews consistently indicated that this training has been successfully conducted. The cornerstone of this is the 'I Know Gender' training course, including a module on 'Gender

1, 3-4, 9, 26-31, 38

Equality and Sustainable Project Management', supplemented by training modules for gender mainstreaming in infrastructure and procurement workshops and capacity-building activities across the organisation.	1, 3, 4, 9, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 38
MI 2.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 2.2: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for environmental sustainability and climate change	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.50**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on environmental sustainability and climate change available and showing evidence of application	3
Element 2: Environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	2
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets	2
Element 4: Environmental screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address environmental sustainability and climate change issues	2
Element 6: Staff capacity development on environmental sustainability and climate change is being or has been conducted	3
MI 2.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
There is no *dedicated* environmental sustainability and climate change policy statement within UNOPS. However, an 'Occupational Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management' Policy issued in 2017 outlines the expectations, principles and responsibilities for environmental protection, including preventing and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Progress has been made against the steps towards meeting the objectives therein, such as *"screen projects with respect to their environmental and social risks…"* and *"engage with UNOPS personnel, partners, contractors and suppliers on HSSE issues"* (pp.3-4). This is supplemented by statements and commitments in other UNOPS corporate documents, such as the Strategic Plan and Sustainability Reports (2018, 2019). UNOPS Strategic Plan (2018-2021) acknowledges that the organisation is responding to a global context of climate pressures and presents the ambition to *"Be known for tangible context-specific contributions made towards countries' achievement of a number of the global goals, including combating climate change."* On this basis, in the Strategic Plan, UNOPS tracks its contribution to climate change resilience through the extent to which it provides services to countries *"with climate change preparedness levels below the 2nd quartile"* (Annex A, p6). UNOPS core results tracking, the balanced scorecard, includes one indicator related to the environmental sustainability of its interventions, and two related to the environmental impact of its operations. In addition, UNOPS' 'Framework for Sustainable Implementation Approaches' includes an 'environmental respect dimension' is used to track work around environmental sustainability and climate change within UNOPS, relative to baselines and targets. This was assessed as part of the midterm review of UNOPS' current Strategic Plan.	1, 2, 4, 9, 13, 32-39

Despite targets being available in both the balanced scorecard and the midterm review, data on UNOPS implementation of environmental screening was not available in either case, with *"compliance to be measured starting 2020"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, Annex II, p5). No evidence was identified by the assessment team to indicate that compliance was being routinely tracked or measured as of November 2020. Although a social and environmental screening is mandatory for most projects in oneUNOPS and spot checks are carried out on project sites including environmental considerations, this is not aggregated or reported at management level. The sustainability counterpart to the balanced scorecard, the annual GRI report, does address environmental sustainability and climate change more thoroughly. Here, UNOPS reports against indicators covering*, inter alia*: biodiversity, emissions, effluents and waste, energy, and water. The GRI reporting does not include targets, however. Environmental sustainability and climate change considerations at project-level are considered within UNOPS through the lens of occupational health, safety, and social and environmental management (HSSE). A Social and Environmental screening is mandatory for all projects except those which are exclusively transactional in nature. The Project Management Manual places emphasis on Category 2 and 3 projects, which are those considered medium-high risk and presenting medium-high project management requirements (indicatively: technical assistance, project management, and infrastructure). If the screening identifies risks, then *"additional studies and environmental review, or a full Social and Environmental Impact Assessment"* may be required (Project Management Manual, Part II, p35). A screening is not considered necessary for projects that are exclusively transactional, such as procurement, HR contracts, or service contracts. UNOPS has a Health, Safety, Social and Environmental (HSSE) corporate unit as shown in UNOPS' organigramme (UNOPS Organigramme, July 2020). This unit – as of mid-2021 – consists only of five individuals, only one of whom is dedicated to social and environmental management. Whilst projects and field offices can request support from the HSSE specialist, completing the HSSE screening and any follow-up must be factored into project costs. Whilst accepting of the realities of UNOPS self-financed model, there was a sense among personnel interviewed that human resources and available funding at field-level are insufficient to fully address HSSE issues. This was seen as compounded by the number of cross-cutting issues to be considered, including gender, PSEA, human rights, and environmental protection. UNOPS does, however, resource a Sustainable Procurement team, which, *inter alia,* has developed the Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement (DRiVE) initiative. This mandatory self-assessment questionnaire includes an environmental management dimension. It is carried out by suppliers (and verified on an as-possible basis by UNOPS) who are provided Corrective Action and Preventative Action Plans (CAPA) in return. DRiVE is used to understand the sustainability of markets and identify areas for capacity building and has been conducted with over 2100 suppliers, in 135 countries. According to UNOPS personnel, 89% of suppliers surveyed by UNOPS found that DRiVE "was a positive experience." Training and support are available to personnel on implementing the social and environmental screening, with personnel interviewed consistently aware and having undertaken the training. However, whilst there is evidence of training being undertaken; *"in 2019, 255 colleagues received face-to-face training on health and safety, and social and environment management"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1, p19), it is unclear whether this is part of a wider process to provide training or capacity development to all applicable personnel.	1, 2, 4, 9, 13, 32-39
MI 2.2 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 2.3: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for human rights including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being "left behind")	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.50**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on human rights available and showing evidence of application	3
Element 2: Human rights indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	2
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect human rights indicators and targets	2
Element 4: Human rights screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address human rights issues	2
Element 6: Staff capacity development on human rights is being or has been conducted	3
MI 2.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
There is no *dedicated* human rights policy statement within UNOPS. However, UNOPS' Executive Office Directive on Occupational Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management states that *"UNOPS shall Prevent the infringement of human rights in all UNOPS activities and facilities."* Progress has been made against the steps towards meeting the objectives therein, such as *"screen projects with respect to their environmental and social risks…"* and *"engage with UNOPS personnel, partners, contractors and suppliers on HSSE issues"* (pp.3-4). This is supplemented by policies and statements within numerous other corporate documents, including the Strategic Plan, the annual reporting of the Executive Director, and the Design Planning Manual for Buildings. UNOPS key management framework, the balanced scorecard, does not explicitly include human rights. It does however include one indicator and target on compliance with minimum requirements on 'Health and Safety, Social and Environmental Management:' *"Share of country offices assessed that comply with the minimum level requirements on HSSE",* with a target of 90%. Data on UNOPS implementation of this indicator was not available, with *"compliance to be measured starting 2020"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, Annex II, p5). No evidence was identified by the assessment team to indicate that compliance was being routinely tracked or measured as of November 2020. Although a social and environmental screening is mandatory for most projects in oneUNOPS and spot checks are carried out on project sites including environmental considerations, this is not aggregated or reported at management level. The Framework for Sustainable Implementation Approaches provides additional indicators and targets; evaluated in the midterm review of the Strategic Plan, addressing aspects of social safeguards, however these are not clearly human rights focused. UNOPS does however monitor and report with regards to 'human rights standards' as part of its annual GRI reporting. However, this does not include targets. A Social and Environmental screening is mandatory for all projects except those which are exclusively transactional in nature. The Project Management Manual places emphasis on Category 2 and 3 projects. If the screening identifies risks, then *"additional studies and environmental review, or a full Social and Environmental Impact Assessment"* may be required (Project Management Manual,	1-2, 4, 9, 13, 32, 35-38, 41

Part II, p35). A screening is not considered necessary for projects that are exclusively transactional, such as procurement, HR contracts, or service contracts. This is reflected in the GRI reporting which identifies that *"human rights reviews or impact assessments are conducted in UNOPS projects on a case-by-case basis. […] In 2019, 8 per cent of infrastructure projects reported conducting human rights impact assessment, compared to 21 per cent in 2018 and 17 per cent in 2017"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p35). UNOPS has a Health, Safety, Social and Environmental (HSSE) corporate unit as shown in UNOPS' organigramme (UNOPS Organigramme, July 2020) which consists of five Health, Safety and Environment specialists. Whilst projects and field offices can request support from the HSSE specialist, completing the HSSE screening and any follow-up must be factored into project costs. Whilst accepting of the constraints of UNOPS self-financed model, there was a perception from personnel interviewed that human and resources at field-level are insufficient to fully address HSSE issues. This was seen as compounded by the number of cross-cutting issues to be considered, including gender, PSEA, human rights, and environmental protection. UNOPS does, however, resource a Sustainable Procurement team, which, *inter alia,* has developed the Delivering Responsibility in Vendor Engagement (DRiVE) initiative. This self-assessment questionnaire includes a human rights dimension. It is carried out by suppliers (and verified on an as-possible basis by UNOPS) who are provided Corrective Action and Preventative Action Plans (CAPA) in return. Whilst voluntary, this is used to understand the sustainability of markets and identify areas for capacity building. An online training course 'United Nations Human Rights Responsibilities' is available for all personnel aimed at increasing capacity for *"upholding human rights responsibilities in their daily work and in taking appropriate action for human rights protection within their functions"* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017). Furthermore, training and support are available to personnel on implementing the social and environmental screening, with personnel interviewed aware and having undertaken the training. However, whilst there is evidence of training being undertaken; *"in 2019, 255 colleagues received face-to-face training on health and safety, and social and environment management"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1, p19), it is unclear whether this is part of a wider process to provide training or capacity development to all applicable personnel.	1-2, 4, 9, 13, 32, 35-38, 41
MI 2.3 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 2.4: Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for other cross-cutting issues (e.g. good governance, protection, nutrition, innovation)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	N/A
Overall MI score	N/A
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on any other cross-cutting issue available and showing evidence of application	N/A
Element 2: Cross-cutting issue indicators and targets fully integrated into the MO's strategic plan and corporate objectives	N/A
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect cross-cutting issue indicators and targets	N/A
Element 4: Cross-cutting issue screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions	N/A

Element 5: Human and financial resources (exceeding benchmarks) are available to address cross-cutting issues	N/A
Element 6: Staff capacity development on cross-cutting issue is being or has been conducted	N/A
MI 2.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
N/A	
MI 2.4 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance agility and accountability.

KPI 3: The operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility	**KPI score**
Highly satisfactory	**3.77**

UNOPS business model is inherently flexible, and its organisational structure meets the requirements of its operating model and the current strategic plan where its personnel and other resources are flexibly aligned and deployed in response to evolving requirements of service delivery. UNOPS has a comparatively small and declining number of staff holding traditional UN fixed-term/permanent contracts and flexibility to deploy personnel on different types of contract depending on needs and demand. An internal restructuring has recently taken place (SLT) and interviews at time of assessment indicated is bedding in. UNOPS has responded/ engaged positively to UNDS reform, with due consideration to the limitations posed by architecture that is dependent on demand for UNOPS services. Unlike other programmatic organisations, UNOPS does not allow for comprehensive footprints in all regions and countries.

UNOPS has experienced growth across all its five service lines which are a long-standing feature of its implementation mandate. Partners confirmed in the 2018-2019 survey that all five service lines remain in demand, with most indicating demand for more than one. The Strategic Plan emphasised that whilst these service lines are the bedrock of UNOPS expertise, it is its ability to flexibly combine them as integrated offerings and specialised solutions for purpose that increases the value it can add to the 2030 Agenda and countries' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNOPS signalled in interviews a strong intention to engage earlier on/ higher up, and regional business plans and other corporate documents demonstrate engagement supporting diversification, including through use of different long-term funding frameworks/ model. The QBRs track UNOPS net engagement revenue, per region, as well as its direct cost, locally managed, regionally managed and centrally managed.

After the introduction of the 1% co-ordination levy and the guidelines issued by the UN Secretariat, UNOPS applied the guidelines to its engagements with its partners. UNOPS interpretation of the guidelines was that given the nature of its mandate, its funding and its accounting principles the levy would not apply to most of its services. Whilst this was confirmed by the UN Controller, UNOPS was still requested to apply the levy as per the spirit of the decision in 2020 and thus UNOPS has taken steps to "ensure implementation of the co-ordination levy will be managed in accordance with the operational guidance and its financial regulations and rules adopted by Executive Board decision 2012/5" (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, pp.3-4; Annual report IAIG - Audit Advisory Committee 2019, Pos. 60). In December 2020, it was determined that UNOPS will apply the levy to all legal agreements, and that it would be applicable to any new engagement that had not yet been recorded in oneUNOPS or that was in "Opportunity" status as of 1st January 2021 (Guidance Note on the 1% Levy and its inclusion in partner negotiations, 2020). At the time of assessment, the assessment team did not identify evidence that 1% levy had as yet been systematically collected and passed on to the UN Secretariat.

UNOPS has a strong Delegation of Authority (DoA) and Accountability Framework, which is cascaded successfully through the levels of the organisation. Positive partner feedback provides significant evidence of speed of decision-making and adequate delegations of authority. The Balance scorecard includes indicators on decentralisation effectiveness.

Comprehensive HR systems and policies are in place for performance-based assessment for UNOPS personnel at a corporate/ team- level geared to the achievement of results. There is strong documentary and interview evidence that the performance assessment system is systematically implemented in UNOPS for all personnel. Rewards and incentives are based on achievement of team-based goals, rather than individual, whilst still allowing individual contributions to be recognised (e.g., merit awards). Clear process is in place to manage disagreement and complaints regarding personnel performance assessments.	
MI 3.1: Organisational structures and staffing ensure that human and financial resources are constantly aligned and adjusted to key functions	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.83**
Element 1: Organisational structure is aligned with, or being reorganised to, requirements set out in the current strategic plan	4
Element 2: Staffing is aligned with, or being reorganised to, requirements set out in the current strategic plan	4
Element 3: Resource allocations across functions are aligned to current organisational priorities and goals as set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 4: Internal restructuring exercises have a clear purpose and intent aligned to the priorities of the current Strategic Plan	4
Element 5: [UN] Engagement in supporting the resident coordinator systems through cost-sharing and resident coordinator nominations	4
Element 6: [UN] Application of mutual recognition principles in key functional areas	4
MI 3.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS' organisational structure has been realigned in view of the current Strategic Plan. Documentation explains that "*UNOPS' global organisation structure is designed to enable the strategic plan and the work activities that contribute to it*" (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017 p5). The 2018 JIU review of Management and Administration in UNOPS found two thirds of respondents from their personnel survey felt the structure corresponded to organisational requirements and was functioning effectively (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS) UNOPS continuously reviews its organisational structure to be fit for purpose (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p37) and has recently refined it (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p12) with a new global structure being established by the Executive Director in 2019. A 'Senior Leadership Team' comprising the Executive Director and the directors of the organisation's four functional pillars, and the Chief Executive of the Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investment Office replaced the Corporate Operations and Senior Leadership Groups (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). The intention was that this new team would enable executive leadership *"to develop clear, coherent positions on the strategic direction and institutional initiatives of UNOPS"*. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p14). Whilst the restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team was noted as significant by personnel, there was also a clearer understanding of the rationale and process for this change. A recent internal review noted that the SLT structure was bedding in well and that, whilst some adjustment and refinements may be necessary, the fundamentals of the structure are working well and do not require substantive change. The Audit Advisory Committee noted in its annual report that the new structure was clear and simple, easy to explain and understand, *"…and envisaged that it would enable quicker decision-making."* (Annual report IAIG - Audit Advisory Committee 2019, Pos. 86-90).	2-5, 8-9, 11, 13-14, 17, 19, 29, 34, 43-46

There has also been a restructuring in reporting lines and coverage in the Asia and Latin American/ Caribbean region (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p37). Also, in 2019, the Executive Director replaced the UNOPS Policy Advisory Committee with a Client Board (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p14).

UNOPS has a blend of personnel with sector expertise and competencies essential for UNOPS' mandate and service lines and a comparatively small UNOPS Staff complement, with 819 UNOPS Staff at the end of 2019 (which includes partner staff, and staff in organisations where UNOPS provides hosted initiative secretariat services, who are subject to the same policies and procedures as UNOPS staff). UNOPS Contractors (in UNOPS the contract type is called Individual Contractor Agreement, or ICA/IICA) makes up the bulk of UNOPS personnel. UNOPS had 3,946 Individual Contractors at the end of 2019. The total of UNOPS personnel therefore stood at 4,765 at the end of 2019. (*Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020: Annex 1 GRI Content Index 2019*) and by the end of Q2 in 2020 there was 4,879 UNOPS Personnel. (*Quarterly Business Review, 2020 Q2. Preliminary financial performance data as of 06 Jul 2020*).

In addition to UNOPS personnel, UNOPS administers contracts on behalf of a range of partners as part of the 'service provider' role. This is often because the partner does not have a contract modality like the ICA contract itself but wishes to employ a number of people in such a manner. UNOPS administer their contracts, but the supervision is done by the partner for whom UNOPS is working for. 7,763 Partner personnel were administered by UNOPS is at the end of 2019 and at the end of 2019, the total number of individuals on UNOPS contracts stood at 12,528, up from 11,671 in 2018.

Staffing continues to be realigned in view of the organisation's operating model and strategic plan. The number of UNOPS personnel employed on traditional UN fixed-term or permanent contracts is declining in proportion to the total number of personnel as UNOPS acknowledge this contract type does not readily support a project-based business model. UNOPS Personnel Contractors are favoured as it is considered a highly flexible contract modality for engagement. These modalities of contract engagement allow UNOPS to flex its human resources proportionately to meet service delivery, whilst minimising staffing costs on the management budget: *"The decrease in the number of staff funded by the management budget reflects continued UNOPS efforts to attribute direct costs to appropriate cost drivers, whilst the changes in senior staff reflect realignment of regional portfolios."* (Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019).

2-5, 8-9, 11, 13-14, 17, 19, 29, 34, 43-46

UNOPS is actively pursuing gender parity, with a number of corporate targets. At the end of 2019 UNOPS had a female workforce of 42% against a target of 50% by the end of 2020 (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content, p28). In terms of women in senior positions, an issue monitored closely by the Executive Board along with the 50% overall target, UNOPS was by end 2019 at 35% against a target of 41% by end 2020, after the executive leadership took the decisive action in 2019 to meet gender parity targets though introducing 'temporary special measures' in recruitment (Sustainability report 2019, p29). Personnel interviewed noted that outreach activities have been conducted to encourage underrepresented groups, such as women, to apply for positions; every vacancy requires at least 20% of applications to be from women otherwise readvertisement is necessary. UNOPS also joined the 'HeForShe Campaign'. Live gender parity dashboards enable offices to monitor their progress towards gender parity.

Variations in vacancy rates across the business units of UNOPS are notable, ranging from 3% to 21% at the end of 2019; though the total vacancy rate was 9%. UNOPS also rotates personnel across geographical locations. "*The practice of rotating people from the regions to headquarter and vice versa has contributed in increasing the mutual understanding and the cooperation between the different parts of the organisation"* (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017).

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There was a clear recognition consistently expressed from personnel interviewed that working for UNOPS was not necessarily a life-long career opportunity; and that there was strong encouragement from senior leaders that UNOPS personnel should be encouraged to rotate around and out of UNOPS. This provides strong motivation for personnel to continually demonstrate their contributions; though it was noted that the constant need to rotate often created a distraction as personnel both bedded into their new role or began the process of looking for new roles.

2-5, 8-9, 11, 13-14, 17, 19, 29, 34, 43-46

Documentation indicates that *"planning and allocation to UNOPS corporate functions, country office management and operations support follows an annual cycle, supported by a dashboard for monitoring disbursement against agreed targets"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS). Guidance for Admin Budgeting exists, and for 2021, indicated that the organisation would continue to issue budgets to cover management expenses (ME) and direct cost for shared services.

The budget and target setting process which takes place between July- December is initiated with a message from the CFO, and includes review of submissions from business units by senior management team prior to submission to Executive Office. For 2021, this process took place between July-December 2020 as shown in the graphic below:

22 July	16 August	21 August	24-28 August	01-18 September	14-23 October	26-30 October	November / December
Soft launch message	**Changes to global structure**	**Template shared**	**Training**	**Budgeting tool open for data input**	**SLT Review meetings**	**Update after SLT review**	**EO Approval**
Message from CFO on the start of next year budgeting	Business unit should submit organisation unit change requested to PCG	CFO or DCFO shares email with template of presentation deadline for submission is 18 Sep	Finance Group will train on the use of budgeting tool template and guidance	During this period the budgeting tool will be open for the input. The presentation template deadline is also 18 September	During this period working SLT ill hold budget meetings with Regions and Groups.	If any changes are required following the review meeting, the budget owner will have 3 days to complete	Budget approved and issued in ERP Resource distribution updated

(Guidance for Admin Budgeting and Target Setting 2021)

Whilst UNOPS have several relevant HQ-level tools, such as the Sustainable Procurement Framework, inclusion of gender or Health and Safety and Social and Environmental management experts in projects requires agreement and funding from the partner. Reflecting this, interviewees considered that UNOPS cross-cutting priorities are somewhat under resourced at the project level.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had some implication on human resource allocations via the creation of a Global Task Force, a small *multi-disciplinary team established to focus exclusively on new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, thus enabling other HQ groups to support the organisation on business-as-usual activities"* (UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19) i.e. organisational priorities and goals. At the time of this assessment there had not been any financial resource allocation implications due to COVID-19 "*UNOPS stated that its performance in the first quarter of 2020 had not been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and that, similarly,*

the pandemic had not resulted in any significant transactions outside the normal course of business." (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p18) but the organisation is unclear whether this position will *change: "At the end of 2019, UNOPS was in a solid financial position with robust reserves. It is closely monitoring the effects of the pandemic and is ready to take relevant measures to preserve its self-financing business model so that it can continue to respond to partner needs around the world" (*Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p4).

Internal restructuring vis-à-vis the creation of a Global Task Force in response to COVID-19 had clear intent to focus "*exclusively on new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, thus enabling other HQ groups to support the organisation on business-as-usual activities"* (UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19). Evidence from partner interviews showed appreciation for UNOPSs speedy COVID-19 response action, as for example in Jordan whereby their persistent and continued working to minimise delays showed UNOPS were "cooperative and willing to risk their lives" and in Serbia where they showed flexibility and were able to do emergency procedures and deliver quickly in a challenging environment. Partners interviewed in Georgia posed different opinions on UNOPS response to COVID-19 with one suggesting they were not the best adaptors to COVID-19, whilst others being very happy with the partnership.

UNOPS is committed to "*adequate, predictable and sustainable funding of the resident coordinator system"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p8). Commitment is evident through UNOPS engagement in cost-sharing; documentation indicates that UNOPS paid the double cost-sharing for the resident coordinator system in full over the last biennium, and in a timely manner. (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p7; Implementation of GA RES 72-279, Addendum to UNOPS Information Note). The midterm review of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 also found that UNOPS *"established accountability of country directors to resident coordinators and took part in a pilot of mutual country-level performance appraisals".* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). Commitment is also evident through engagement in resident coordinator nominations, and as of January 2020, one female UNOPS staff member left to serve the whole system as a Resident Coordinator, one UNOPS staff member remained in the pool of Resident Coordinators, and the organisation was actively encouraging its staff to pursue RC roles as part of their career development" (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Regular Session 2020, p2).

UNOPS was involved in the design of the mutual recognition statement and signed it. The commitment to its application is clear in documentation *"UNOPS stands ready to collaborate with a purpose, and to deploy its technical expertise in an agile manner to where capacities need to be reinforced and enhanced, irrespective of UNOPS' physical presence in a given location"* (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p6).

UNOPS is recognised as being "*the central procurement resource for the UN-system, emphasising efficient, transparent and cost-effective delivery of goods and services*" (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017). It is thus considered well positioned to respond to the needs of country-based planning processes in the context of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) especially within the areas of expertise (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p3) and have policies and procedures related to procurement, administration, human resources and logistics that enable *"mutual recognition of another entity's policies and procedures"*.

There is documentary evidence of UNOPS applying mutual recognition principles in procurement, for example supporting the procurement of USD 82 million worth of goods through 'UN Web Buy Plus' as part of shared services provided across the United Nations and on behalf of governments.

2-5, 8-9, 11, 13-14, 17, 19, 29, 34, 43-46

In 2019, United Nations organisations increased their orders by 45 per cent over 2018." (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p7). Also, e-sourcing, a subset of UNOPS' e-procurement platform was independently verified by the Gartner Group in 2019 as having generated a 24% reduction of processing time for procurement processes, generating savings of USD400 on each procurement exercise, or over USD1,000,000 when compared to costs in 2016 (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p5). The work on behalf of UN partners in procurement has increased by 34% since 2015 and by 70% in the area of human resources. These two service lines comprise around 83 per cent of UNOPS' delivery to organisations in the UN system" (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p5).	2-5, 8-9, 11, 13-14, 17, 19, 29, 34, 43-46
MI 3.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**
MI 3.2: Resource mobilisation efforts consistent with the core mandate and strategic priorities ***Interpretation: With its demand driven, self-financed model, UNOPS generate resources from fees and cost recovery and is dependent on demand for its services. A comparable aspect to capture therefore is business development and engagement.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support explicitly aligned to current strategic plan ***Interpretation:*** *Corporate documents provide strategic direction in terms of sources of revenue, (partner demand for UNOPS services) consistent with strategic plan.*	3
Element 2: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support reflects recognition of need to diversify the funding base, particularly in relation to the private sector ***Interpretation:*** *Business development support diversification of partners and demand for UNOPS offerings.*	4
Element 3: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support seeks multi-year funding within mandate and strategic priorities ***Interpretation:*** *Business development practices and modalities encourage predictable multi-year engagement.*	4
Element 4: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support prioritises the raising of domestic resources from partner countries/institutions, aligned to goals and objectives of the strategic plan/ relevant country plan	N/A
Element 5: [UN] 1% levy systematically collected and passed on to the UN Secretariat	2
MI 3.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
A sample of regional business plans reviewed for the Latin America and Caribbean, Africa and Asia regions provide evidence that strategic direction is promoted in terms of partner engagement and geographical priorities. For example, by categorising countries into four tiers, based on an analysis of donor priorities, funding and UNOPS comparative advantages (2018 to 2021 Business Plan Asia Region) and determining whether likewise, the Africa Region Business Plan identifies the Islamic Development Bank as an emerging, priority partner although it is not a top donor. (AFR Business Plan 2018-2021).	1, 7-9, 13, 15, 17, 43-44, 46-47, 49-52

Evidence from personnel interviewed notes an emerging new direction for UNOPS engagement, as "earlier on, higher up" and a possible new focus on Building Better, indicating the continuous business development and evolution of strategic thinking in terms of how to mobilise new partners for new types of engagement and project delivery UNOPS' engagement with Mexico is a case in point for this type of new, significant engagement, mobilising new resources from the Mexican government for pharmaceutical procurement – approximately USD 6 billion – which represents a very large scale engagement for UNOPS and considered a 'breakthrough'. The 2018-21 Strategic Plan explains that the organisation is expanding its ability to attract and mobilise alternative funding sources to add value, and is doing this through piloting a series of new vehicles: a) "the crowd funding platform 'Engage' b) the 'Catalyst' initiative, which supports innovation hubs for 'green- technology' start-ups c) the initiative for social impact investment for infrastructure (S3I)" (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). Attracting private sector investment for infrastructure development that contributes to achieving the SDGs is a priority for UNOPS (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017). The S3I initiative is considered a model for channelling private sector investment (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p10); this was also referenced consistently in personnel interviews. UNOPS' current engagement strategy and business development efforts support the diversification of partners and partner categories. The JIU review found UNOPS has made efforts to do this, as does the QCPR survey (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS; (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p19). The organisation reports annually on the effect of measures taken to broaden donor and partner base, and on its delivery by partner category, highlighting trends and individual donors, where appropriate, having a goal of ensuring a continued healthy level of diversity within its portfolio of partners (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), pp.20-36). The project-led nature of UNOPS' business model means that funding is at project-level and most projects are multi-year engagements. Personnel interviews noted the value of multiyear engagement for efficiencies due to savings and reduced delivery times. There is evidence that UNOPS has various types of engagements, some of which promote multi-year engagement, for example 'Framework Agreements' (when an agreement to establish a framework for future engagements with a funding source or a client is made, setting out the areas of collaboration and operational arrangements), Partnerships and 'Collaborative' Partnerships (a long-term agreement with a partner to share benefits, costs and risk in relation to joint activity) (OI Acceptance of Framework, Collaborative and Teaming Agreements). A 'Partner Funding Handbook' sets out business development considerations for twelve different funding modalities across UNOPS although no explicit mention is given to multi-year engagements (Partner Funding Handbook). After the introduction of the 1% co-ordination levy and the guidelines issued by the UN Secretariat, UNOPS applied the guidelines to its engagements with its partners. UNOPS interpretation of the guidelines was that given the nature of its mandate, its funding and its accounting principles the levy would not apply to most of its services. Whilst this was confirmed by the UN Controller, UNOPS was still requested to apply the levy as per the spirit of the decision in 2020 and thus UNOPS has taken steps to "ensure implementation of the co-ordination levy will be managed in accordance with the operational guidance and its financial regulations and rules adopted by Executive Board decision 2012/5" (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, pp.3-4; Annual report IAIG - Audit Advisory Committee 2019, Pos. 60). In December 2020, it was determined that	1, 7-9, 13, 15, 17, 43-44, 46-47, 49-52

UNOPS will apply the levy to all legal agreements, and that it would be applicable to any new engagement that had not yet been recorded in oneUNOPS or that was in "Opportunity" status as of 1st January 2021 (Guidance Note on the 1% Levy and its inclusion in partner negotiations, 2020).	1, 7-9, 13, 15, 17, 43-44, 46-47, 49-52
MI 3.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**
MI 3.3: Resource reallocation/programming decisions responsive to need can be made at a decentralised level ***Interpretation: MI 3.3 captures issues related to the level of decision-making in a multilateral organisation. As UNOPS is not a programme-based organisation, the comparable aspect to capture relates to decision-making on the engagement acceptance and portfolio management rather than on programming and allocation decisions.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: An organisation-wide policy or guidelines exist that describe the delegation of decision-making authorities at different levels of the organisation	4
Element 2: Policy/guidelines or other documents provide evidence of a sufficient level of decision-making autonomy available at the country level (or other decentralised level as appropriate) regarding resource reallocation/programming	4
Element 3: Evaluations or other reports contain evidence that reallocation/programming decisions have been made to positive effect at country or other local level as appropriate ***Interpretation:*** *Assumption behind is that decentralised means closer to the client (and thus better), and the assessment will look for evidence of this.*	4
Element 4: The MO has made efforts to improve or sustain the delegation of decision-making on resource allocation/programming to the country or other relevant levels ***Interpretation:*** *As above.*	4
MI 3.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS has a Delegation of Authority (DoA) and Accountability Framework in place which *"creates a foundation for linking authority with responsibility and accountability throughout the organisation."* (EOI Delegation of Authority and Accountability Framework). Delegation of authority in UNOPS is based on the principle that authority should be delegated to the most appropriate level, and the framework aims to aid the organisation in transparent, effective and efficient decision-making. There are various policies and guidelines related to decision-making autonomy, engagement acceptance and portfolio management within UNOPS. The Business Developer, who is typically partnerships personnel, is responsible for exploring opportunities and developing engagements, acting on behalf of the Project Executive. An Engagement Acceptance Committee (EAC) is responsible for the evaluation of engagements with high-risk profiles that may have potential organisation-wide consequences, and the Executive Director can delegate the responsibility for some stages of decision-making in cases where doing so will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. (OI Acceptance of Engagements, 2nd April 2020). PMM guidelines explain that there are four levels of DoA and that different PM activities may require different levels of DoA, for example DoA level 3 is required for approving an engagement whereas those requiring approval of Engagement Acceptance Committee need Level 4. (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines).	3, 7-8, 13, 17, 47, 53-54

UNOPS has in place regulations governing the level of decentralisation that partnerships themselves should be managed, outlined in the 'OD Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements'. This states that partner management should be done at all levels by relevant UNOPS personnel, but formalisation of partner agreements done only by the appropriate personnel who have delegated authority. The management of partners that may lead to agreement opportunities globally should be done in cooperation with the lead of the Partnership Group. For agreement opportunities within the region in should be under the lead of the relevant Regional office, and for local opportunities at the country or hub level it should be done by the respective country or hub. (OD Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements, p4). The 2019 QCPR survey indicates that authority is delegated on a country-by-country basis, and up to a pre-defined amount for country level representatives when committing funding as part of a joint programme with other UN entities at the country level. (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p35). The 2017 EFQM report found UNOPS to *"demonstrate ability to act fast and with agility on partner requests, with the decentralised structure enabling close cooperation with partners at both the regional and local level"* (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report). Likewise, the most recent JIU Review, of Management and Administration in UNOPS, found processes regarding the delegation of authority and accountability to be considered adequate but suggested the DoA system should be regularly assessed and audited periodically by the IAIG. Partner views were positive regarding the level of DoA they observed of UNOPS, and of the implications of this. Some expressed the view that DoA was sufficient for allowing decisions to be made in a timely manner, even when local personnel had limited decision-making authority. Evidence from personnel interviews consistently notes that every project manager has capacity and power to control, raise issues, escalate and say when things are not going well. The balanced scorecard also provides evidence of an intent to strengthen decentralised decision-making as it includes as an indicator the "increase in new and extended partner agreements from global partners supported by liaison offices" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, DP/OPS/2020/4). Both personnel and partner interviews indicate satisfaction with the current level of decentralised decision-making with partners frequently stating they never or very rarely needed to consult HQ and that all decision could be taken at country level.	3, 7-8, 13, 17, 47, 53-54
MI 3.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 3.4: HR systems and policies performance based and geared to the achievement of results	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: A system is in place which requires the performance assessment of all staff, including senior staff	4
Element 2: There is evidence that the performance assessment system is systematically and implemented by the organisation across all staff and to the required frequency	4
Element 3: The performance assessment system is clearly linked to organisational improvement, particularly the achievement of corporate objectives, and to demonstrate ability to work with other agencies	4

Element 4: The performance assessment of staff is applied in decision-making relating to promotion, incentives, rewards, sanctions, etc.	4
Element 5: A clear process is in place to manage disagreement and complaints relating to staff performance assessments	4
MI 3.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS has, within the PQMS, a set of processes and procedures for the periodic and mandatory performance assessment of all personnel who have worked for UNOPS for six months or more in any calendar year. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p33). The intention of this is to promote the most effective use of an individual's expertise, determine the quality of their outputs, recognise achievement, and identify and learning and developing needs. (OI Personnel Management Framework, 2017). The Balanced Scorecard includes an indicator on "personnel performance completion rate" which stood at 97% in 2019 against a target of 90%. Documentation confirms there to be a high completion rate of the mandatory performance assessment for both staff (93%) and personnel holding ICAs (98%) with an overall completion rate of 97%. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p.33. Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Annexes.). This is an increase from the 2017 overall completion rate of 95%, and above the 2018-2019 target of 90% (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p4). The focus on completion of performance assessment was corroborated consistently by personnel interviewed. UNOPS performance assessment system is supposed to be linked to organisational achievement; the Personnel Management Framework attempts to secure linkages between an individual's performance and the achievement of organisational results (OD Human Resources, Ethics and Culture). However, the most recent JIU report notes *"respondents commented that performance was almost exclusively assessed against the results of business acquisition and revenue generation*" (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS). The system also attempts to secure linkages between individual performance and corresponding rewards and sanctions (OD Human Resources, Ethics and Culture). A rewards programme exists, consisting of merit reward payments and financial awards "*for exceptional individual and team efforts in the contribution to the achievement of UNOPS' corporate objectives".* Personnel interviewed were aware of this programme. The PQMS sets out the eligibility criteria for these and outlines their processes (OI Personnel Management Framework, 2017). The JIU review welcomes the rewards programme as good management practice and incentive for high performance of the work force. 59% of respondents to the JIU personnel survey "*…considered the current performance management system sufficiently linked to career development.*" (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS). Personnel interviewed indicated that 'professional achievement' was a key motivation for achieving targets, with performance reviews feeding into their prospects for applying for new jobs. As UNOPS is not a programmatic organisation and 'not a career organisation' according to personnel interviewed, this is particularly important. Personnel interviews also suggested that financial rewards are only realised if targets are met/achieved and the performance assessment is completed on time, and that the system is structured so as to reward team performance rather than individual performance in the sense that rewards are to the office and shared as a % of individual salary.	2, 7-8, 35-36, 55-58

Regarding sanctions, documents indicate that the outcome of internal grievances and investigations into misconduct may feed into performance assessment. (Standards of Conduct - Enabling Environments, p24; OI Investigations into Misconduct, Mar 2020) Personnel interviewees were aware and noted the 'sanctions procedure' for non-performers. The Personnel Management Framework includes the possibility to rebut less than satisfactory performance and there is a process within the PMQS for managing disagreement and complaints regarding this. In addition, other personnel retained under a UNOPS-specific contractual modality may raise concerns regarding their performance assessment to the Director, PCG or Deputy Director, PCG, their designate (OI Personnel Management Framework, 2017, p9).	2, 7-8, 35-36, 55-58
MI 3.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.40**

An Operational Instruction on 'Acceptance of Engagements' provides a framework for developing, assessing, and accepting Engagement Agreements, and the Strategic Plan highlights the importance of adequate scope for adaptation given different contexts, using country typologies and risk indicators to inform medium- and longer-term planning. The midterm review of the Strategic Plan illustrated that there is high correlation between UNOPS activity and global needs; with "most of its *activities concentrated in the lowest ranking countries on the human development index and the highest ranking on the humanitarian risk index".* The OI Acceptance of Engagement Agreements was most recently revised in 2020 and updated in accordance with the PMM.

UNOPS has clear targets for delivery and financial information indicate that overall planned delivery met institutionally agreed performance indicators, including over performing targets in 2019. Audit reports provide explanations for variance against plan, as does the UNOPS Annual Report. Variance relates primarily to external factors, including COVID-19, and UNOPS is taking steps to improve performance on operational closure, identified as an area needing improvement.

UNOPS applies the principles of output-based budgeting, aligned with its Strategic Plan. Whilst budget documentation is available for management results in the 2018-2019 biennium; the most recent iteration (2020-21) does not contain such granular information. As a result of UNOPS' decision to monitor and report only to output level, there is no evidence on costing of contribution goals that would inherently go beyond output. oneUNOPS, which is under continuous improvement (oneUNOPS 2.0), already allows comprehensive tracking of costs from activity to output effectively, and the QBRs also include quarterly output reporting.

Crucially aware of issues related to risk, UNOPS has a strong internal control environment, including internal audit and investigation, ethics and compliance, and an enterprise risk management framework. External audit, complying with international standards, are mandatory and in addition UNOPS is regularly assessed by JIU and UNBOA and has undergone additional EFQM assessments which is unique in the UN system. Review of recent external audits confirm compliance with international standards across functions. Audits include a Management response providing a clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit and responses are closely monitored through monthly reporting in the QBR.

UNOPS has a strong culture of ethics, and institutionalisation of investigation and anti-fraud and -corruption processes and practices, with cases of misconducted effectively explored, concluded and reported, including to the governing bodies. A resolution process for both formal and informal grievances exist and advocacy campaigns have been conducted, i.e. 'Speak UP'.

UNOPS has a Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy with mechanisms in place to regularly track status, including comprehensive regional action plans. Regional plans are mandatory and country plans presently optional. Designated PSEA focal point are assigned. Training plans demonstrate an ambition to build awareness on SEA policies, an intention which may however have been affected by COVID-19. Evidence exists on standards and due diligence processes to ensure that implementing partners prevent and respond to SEA. Joint working with UNFPA is underway,

though present nascent in nature, and UNOPS is a member of the UNPSEA working group. The ED reports on sanctions and the Investigations Unit of IAIG have also conducted investigations. There is evidence of intention to strengthen a victim/ survivor-centred approach.

The policy of Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) is jointly articulated with the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, but has separate mechanisms in place to regularly track status. UNOPS has clearly identifiable roles and structures (network of peers), including psychological support. The SH & SEA Strategy makes training intentions clear, and evidence suggests training and personnel awareness building has been undertaken. SPEAK UP hotline exist and UNOPS acts in a timely manner, with transparent reporting through the annual report of internal audit and ED report. These feed into inter-agency HR mechanisms

MI 4.1: Transparent decision-making for resource allocation, consistent with strategic priorities over time (adaptability) ***Interpretation: The focus is on transparency. UNOPS is demand driven and non-programmatic and therefore does not allocate resources to country or sector programmes for example, but for UNOPS a comparable dimension is transparency in terms of partner engagement, how are partners selected, priorities established, etc.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: An explicit organisational statement or policy is available that clearly defines criteria for allocating resources to partners	3
Element 2: The criteria reflect targeting to the highest priority themes/countries/areas of intervention as set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 3: Resource allocation mechanisms allow for adaptation in different contexts	3
Element 4: The organisational policy or statement is regularly reviewed and updated	4
MI 4.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
As a self-financed organisation UNOPS does not receive assessed, core or non-core contributions. UNOPS' work is built around the implementation of projects through agreements (also referred to as engagements) signed with partners. UNOPS partners with governments, the UN system and other partners including intergovernmental institutions, international and regional financing institutions, foundations, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. UNOPS sets out criteria that must be met to commit its resources to a partnership: *"All engagements shall comply with UN values, principles and goals, as well as UNOPS mission, vision and Strategic Plan; […] UNOPS shall engage in the provision of services that align with its mandate and strategy, where it can add value, and in response to requests or with the endorsement of its clients and beneficiaries …"* (OI Acceptance of Engagements, 2nd April 2020). Although demand driven, the 2018-21 Strategic Plan suggests UNOPS will *"enhance its ability to strategically select and categorise the activities for which investment in substantiated accounts of effect will be prioritised. This will be especially important in relation to social impact investment"* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021). Once an engagement is agreed, UNOPS, as the custodian of the resources, establishes separate entries in its financial management system enabling linkage between the resources available to the partner who provided them, and to the specific engagement signed by the partner (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017). Resource allocation is dependent on the specifics of the partner engagement. The priorities set out in the strategic plan cascade into regional business plans, which outline the ambitions for country portfolios, including the specific selection of partners and engagement type at country level. These are regularly reviewed and adjusted when conditions change (Project	1, 3-4, 9, 47, 59

Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p58). According to interviews, the partnership team at HQ holds responsibility for ensuring alignment with the SP and organisational priorities and rules and procedures, and the regional or country-based partnership personnel, jointly with country directors and business developers hold a crucial role in identifying opportunities and initiate engagement with existing and new partners. As evidence of the application of this, the "share of engagements regularly assessed against UNOPS criteria for successful projects", stood at 100% in 2019. These criteria include 'core values: the project was the right one for UNOPS', under which it is mandated that the project is in alignment with UNOPS contribution goals (Project Management Manual pt. I, p91). UNOPS cost-setting process is inherently flexible, as it is tailored to both the conditions and resources required for every engagement, for example through the addition of the risk increment. The Strategic Plan outlines an intent to ensure that UNOPS applies this in a range of priority contexts, using country typologies and risk indicators to inform medium- and longer-term planning. It suggests that this will include prioritising investments and developing strategic approaches to advancing specialised solutions to achieve global goals and local objectives in different contexts. (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p6). Evidence indicates that UNOPS operating model and costs are able to be applied across priority contexts: the midterm review of the Strategic Plan illustrates that there is high correlation between UNOPS activity and need with "most of its *activities concentrated in the lowest ranking countries on the human development index and the highest ranking on the humanitarian risk index".* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p91). The Strategic Plan and other policy documents relevant to resource allocation and partner engagement are reviewed and revised periodically as mandated in the EOI Policy and Process Management to ensure they remain fit for purpose and support the organisation to effectively implement its activities. (EOI Policy and Process Management.) The O1 Acceptance of Engagement Agreements was most recently revised in 2020 and updated in accordance with the PMM. (OI Acceptance of Engagement Agreements, 2020). Interviews with personnel at the HQ level indicated that changes are being made or considered in light of new, large scale and high-risk projects such as in Mexico, for example regarding the level of reserves the organisation holds, which engagements need to go through the Engagement Assurance Committee and in relation to the Contracts and Property Committee at HQ. The Quarterly Business Reviews tracks the changes in priority partners.	1, 3-4, 9, 47, 59
MI 4.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**
MI 4.2: Allocated resources disbursed as planned ***Interpretation: Focus is on "as planned". As UNOPS implements projects on behalf of partners, it does not apply the term disbursement, but the term delivery. Also, it does not have programmes, but operates based on projects. Elements have been adjusted to capture this.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: The institution sets clear targets for disbursement to partners ***Interpretation:*** *Targets for delivery.*	4
Element 2: Financial information indicates that planned disbursements were met within institutionally agreed margins ***Interpretation:*** *Planned delivery within margins set.*	4

Element 3: Clear explanations, including changes in context, are available for any variances against plans	3
Element 4: Variances relate to external factors rather than to internal procedural blockages	2

MI 4.2 Analysis	**Source documents**

UNOPS has a global Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system for managing resource allocation *which ensures resources are not spent beyond the allocated amount, and allows for continued monitoring against intended use"* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017).

Targets are set under the 'Process' and 'Finance' part of the Balance Scorecard Perspective and management goal C (Process Excellence) and D (Financial Stewardship), as detailed in the Budget estimates for the biennium 2018-2019, and then reported on in the Annual Report of the ED (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p6).

Goal	Driver	Performance indicator	2017 baseline	2018-19 targets	2018 results	2019 results
C. Process excellence	C1. Manage efficiency and consistency	Share of engagements regularly assessed against UNOPS criteria for successful projects	98%	98%	100%	100%
		Average project start-up times	95 days (2016)	<95 days	n/a	44 days
		Timely operational closure of projects	80%	85%	69%	61%

Driver	Performance indicator	2017 baseline	2018-19 targets	2018 results	2019 results
D1. Manage growth and delivery	Ratio between value of annual project delivery on existing partner agreements, and value of signed new and extended partner agreements	76% (average 2012-16)	70-80%	83%	108%
	Proportion of new and extended partner agreements that are in compliance with cost recovery polict	Not available	95%	98%	99%

(Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p6)

In UNOPS, 'client project disbursement' equates to 'delivery' and the Quarterly Business Review monitors delivery at the corporate level, for example the Q3 report indicates the year-to-date actual delivery was 1,589 (USD million) against a year-to-date target of 1,445 (USD million) which is 110% of the target. (Quarterly Business Review Q3/2020; Preliminary financial performance data as of 21 Oct 2020), consistent with actual delivery outperforming targets also in 2019 as shown in table above (Goal D1).

9, 14, 29, 35, 61-63, 93

Delivery	Status	Annual target	YTD target	2020 actual	% of YTD target	2019 actual	Growth % (20 vs 19)
AFR	●	273	294	231	113%	197	17%
AR	●	461	346	367	106%	339	8%
ECR	●	332	227	269	118%	222	21%
LCR	●	342	256	248	97%	328	–24%
MR	●	205	154	203	132%	203	0%
NYSC	●	344	258	242	94%	260	–7%
HQ		–	–	29	–	26	15%
Delivery	●	1,957	1,445	1,589	110%	1,576	1%

(Quarterly Business Review Q3/2020; Preliminary financial performance data as of 21 Oct 2020),

Explanation is given for delivery delays and variance against plans. Audit reports revealed that there was overspend in some projects such as a cash overspend of USD 454 671 across seven projects covered by the Amman office, although all of these projects did were overall within budget. Audit revealed that five of these were due to delays in receiving payments from partners (they were for HR services projects), one was due to the project being frozen and awaiting funding source's feedback on the Certified Final Financial Statements (CFFS), and the other was a project pending approval by funding source for additional funding (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman). Effective delivery is dependent on effective processes and process excellence is one of the goals tracked in the balanced scorecard through two indicators: average project start-up times and timely operational closure of projects. In 2019 the first was 44 days, down from 95 days in the baseline year of 2016 and the latter 61%, below the 85% target set for 2018/2019. IPMG issued guidelines on project closure in September 2020 to improve performance. Delivery and process efficiency are also tracked in the Quarterly Assurance reports through a number of different indicators which allows disaggregation by geographical region and very closely through the Quarterly Business Review reports. The most recent report from the UN Board of Auditors found a sample check of 10 high value, delayed emergency procurement cases *with a consolidated value of USD 15.27 million,* to have procurement delays ranging from 50 to 278 days, that would *translate into delays in the completion of projects and adversely affect the performance of the organisation and the management goal of partner value"* (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p35). UNOPS response to this indicated that this was mainly due to the war in country (Yemen) and stated that emergency procurement procedures applied in processes leading to the awarding of contracts but not in the contract management stage. The Board has noted several reasons for variances comprising both external factors and internal procedural blockages. This includes delays due to lack of communication between the donor and the office, the application of bank charges, the requirement for new tranche requests for contributions, office focal points not following the process and quality management system for correct funds application or not creating tranche requests within the stated duration (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p45). Partner interviewees showed a mixed perception of effectiveness, in that some had experienced a lengthy procurement process and delays resulting in projects "*being slow at getting off the ground*", whilst others stated that efficient procurement was a major strength. There were isolated cases of dissatisfaction expressed by partners regarding the liquidation of advances provided to UNOPS and that regulations were not followed. UNOPS conducts a partner satisfaction survey every two years and results of the 2019 survey showed a 76% satisfaction rate against a target of 85% and an 83% average in 2014-2016 (UNOPS Partner Survey Presentation, May 2019, p10). Partner satisfaction is also tracked closely through the Quarterly Business reviews, broken down by geographical region.	9, 14, 29, 35, 61-63, 93
MI 4.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

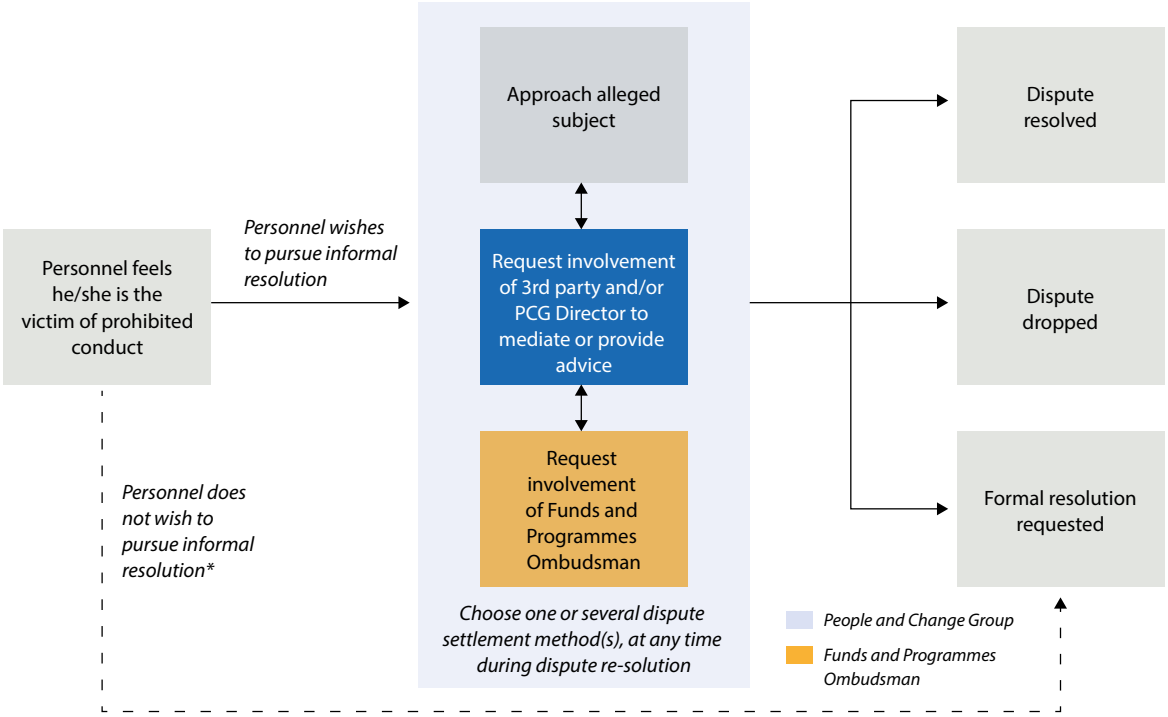
MI 4.3: Principles of results-based budgeting applied ***Interpretation: With a service delivery mandate, UNOPS considers itself responsible and accountable only to output level, and RBB therefore is interpreted as equivalent to output-based budgeting.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: The most recent organisational budget clearly aligns financial resources with strategic objectives/intended results of the current strategic plan	3
Element 2: A budget document is available that provides clear costs for the achievement of each management result	3
Element 3: Systems are available and used to track costs from activity to result (output)	4
Element 4: There is evidence of improved costing of management and development results in budget documents reviewed over time (evidence of building a better system)	3
MI 4.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
Principles of results-based (output based) budgeting are applied at UNOPS following the release of the PMM and PM System 'oneUNOPS Projects' in 2019, to "*better account for deliverables*" (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Annexes.) A resource plan is presented in the 'Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021' document which includes 2020-2021 budget estimates alongside the estimates and actuals/projection for 2018-2019. Resources are broken down into 'operational reserve beginning of period' and 'total revenue on budget basis' (Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021). The budget estimates for the biennium 2018-2019 and 2020-21 contain a table presenting targets and resources for management results by functional cluster. UNOPS has an Enterprise Project Management System and uses 'oneUNOPS Projects' for tracking. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p14) Quarterly Business Reviews present output-based reporting data. (Quarterly Business Review, 2020 Q1; Quarterly Business Review 2020 Q2) and are considered a good practice for Senior Management to assess the organisation's collective performance "*through the consolidation of information on business activities at all levels.*" (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS). The Quarterly Business Reviews present output-based reporting in that they report delivery and engagement acceptance by service line, hence facilitating the corporate business analysis, and also present project budget balance, by service line. There is evidence of improvement in costing of management and development results in the budget documents reviewed over time and evidence of building a better system, though, for example the organisation's transition to G suite and release of oneUNOPS Projects 2.0, as well as launch of a new *intranet to capitalise on related productivity platforms and simplify and improve information flows across the organisation* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p14).	8, 13, 19, 29, 36, 63
MI 4.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.4: External audit or other external reviews certify that international standards are met at all levels, including with respect to internal audit	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: External audit conducted which complies with international standards	4
Element 2: Most recent external audit confirms compliance with international standards across functions	4
Element 3: Management response is available to external audit	4
Element 4: Management response provides clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit	4
MI 4.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
The external auditors are appointed on a rotating basis, currently China. UNOPS allocates considerable time to external auditors, who are 'in house' for nine months of the year. Assessments are also carried out by JIU and UNBOA and UNOPS management systems have also been audited for compliance to various ISO Management System Standards, leading to a perception from UNOPS personnel interviewed that they are "heavily audited". The most recent external audit of UNOPS was published in July 2020 and included an audit of the financial statements of UNOPS for the financial year ending 31st December 2019. It was conducted in *conformity with both the financial regulations and rules of UNOPS, as well as the International Standards on Auditing* (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p9). The audit confirmed that UNOPS complied with international standards across functions with its financial statements fairly presently the organisation's financial position and cash flows *in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).* Management responses are available for external audits and for audit by the UNBOA, for example the report to the Executive Board titled 'Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, 2019'. A specific response from UNOPS management is provided/integrated within the document 'Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 and Report of the Board of Auditors' following each recommendation of the Board of Auditors too. Some of the responses to recommendations contain plans of how they will be addressed but others provide no detail i.e., just 'UNOPS agrees with the recommendation.' However, the report to the Executive Board provides further insight into action plans for addressing issues. Personnel interviewed at HQ noted that any recommendation open for over 18 months has to be reported to the EB and is reported on in the Quarterly Business Reviews.	14, 64
MI 4.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

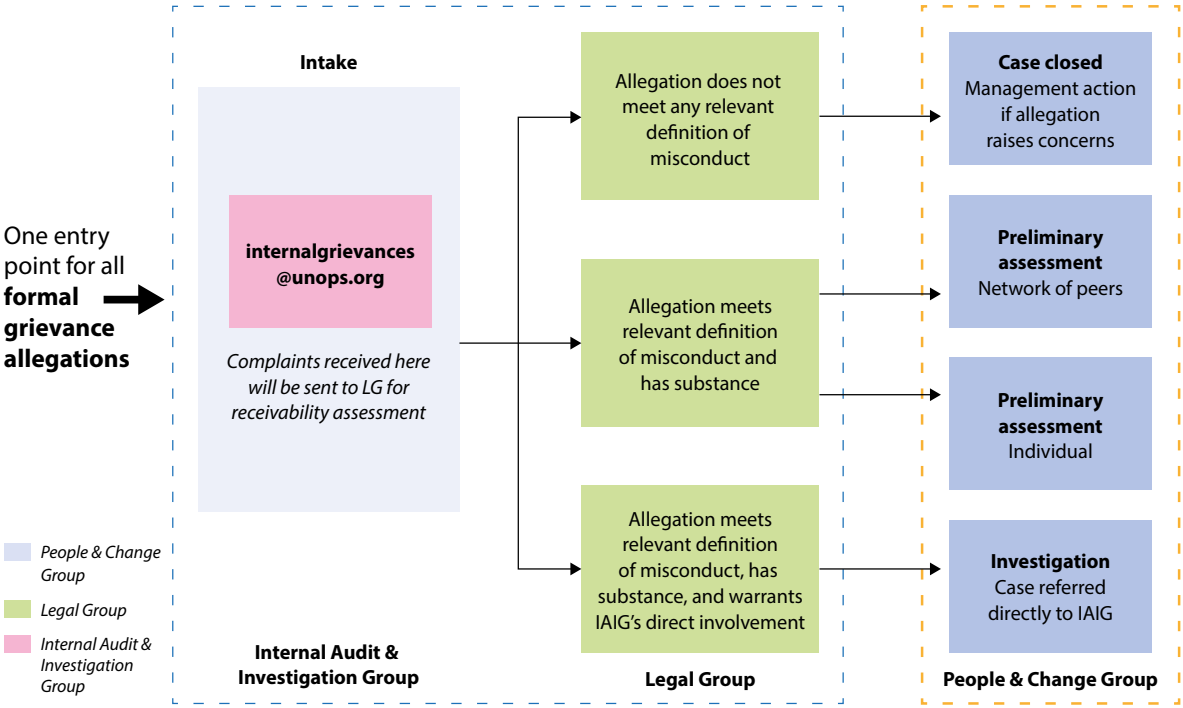
MI 4.5: Issues or concerns raised by internal control mechanisms (operational and financial risk management, internal audit, safeguards etc.) adequately addressed	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.8**
Element 1: A clear policy or organisational statement exists on how issues identified through internal control mechanisms/reporting channels (including misconduct such as fraud, sexual misconduct) will be addressed	4

Element 2: Management guidelines or rules provide clear guidance on the procedures for addressing any identified issues and include timelines	3
Element 3: Clear guidelines are available for staff on reporting any issues identified	4
Element 4: A tracking system is available that records responses and actions taken to address any identified issues	4
Element 5: Governing body or management documents indicate that relevant procedures have been followed/action taken in response to identified issues, including recommendations from audits (internal and external) with clear timelines for action	4
MI 4.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS has an Internal Control Framework to provide the organisation with *"reasonable assurance that it achieves its operational, reporting and compliance objectives".* It is closely linked with UNOPS' framework for Enterprise Risk Management (ERM); they are considered mutually reinforcing of one another (OD Internal Control Framework, Dec 2018). Five integrated components of UNOPS' ICF are as follows: i) control environment; ii) risk assessment; iii) control activities; iv) information and communication; v) monitoring activities. The Investigations section of the IAIG is responsible for conducting investigations into reports of misconduct that involve UNOPS personnel, such as mismanagement, fraud, corruption, retaliation on whistle-blowers, abuse of authority, sexual harassment, workplace harassment, violation or wilful disregard of UNOPS regulations, rules and other administrative instructions. (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS). UNOPS also has Operational Instructions on 'Investigations into Misconduct', 'Policy to address Fraud and Corruption', and 'Personnel Management Framework' and an Internal Audit and Investigations Charter. The ICF stipulates that it is the primary responsibility of management to identify and manage risks, establish effective controls related to reporting and compliance objectives and document such, on the premise "*Internal controls are only as strong as the attention and attitudes that senior management and personnel direct at them.*" (OD Internal Control Framework, Dec 2018). The ICF explains that management shall ensure internal controls are regularly updated to remain effective to mitigate risks and to adapt to changes in UNOPS internal/external context, business processes and technology. This is done for example through integrating controls into business practices and automating them where possible. (OD Internal Control Framework, Dec 2018). A resolution process for both formal and informal grievances exist:	8, 13, 29, 43, 55-57, 63, 65-66, 75, 104

Informal grievances resolution process



Resolution process – 1



Details on how to report are provided in individual policies for example in the Policy to address Fraud and Corruption (OI Policy to address Fraud and Corruption). Documentation suggests that for grievances related to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, the 'Speak Up' platform should be used (Standards of Conduct - Enabling Environments, p44). There is also an email address for confidentially reporting internal grievances (including harassment). Personnel interviewed noted that in the last quarter of 2020, two key communications campaigns were rolled-out around 'Speak up' and 'an introduction to the ethics office', helping to raise awareness which it is hoped will translate into active use. The Internal Audit and Investigations Charter mandates IAIG to establish and maintain a system to monitor follow up actions taken on audit and investigation reports and in 2019, IAIG collaborated with ICT to develop a real-time audit recommendation tracking tool covering all oversight recommendations made by IAIG, the United Nations Board of Auditors and JIU which was launched in February 2020 allowing management to track the status of recommendations on a global, regional or departmental basis in oneUNOPS. (Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p22). Personnel interviewed at HQ made reference to this internal tracking system; reiterating its intent to ensure timely action is taken through its live dashboard and time stamps for who did what and when, all documented in the same place. The Quarterly Business Reviews provide an overview of the status of oversight recommendations, as does the Annual Report of the IAIG and Annual report of the Executive Director. (Quarterly Business Review, 2020 Q1, Quarterly Business Review 2020 Q2, p15, Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p14, Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p10). The Quarterly Business review for example records the status of high-risk oversight recommendations, disaggregated by region and including the recommendation from IAIG, BOA and JIU. Personnel interviews demonstrated awareness that that, at the request of UNOPS management, the internal audit team conducted some analysis into trends of recommendations, finding most to be in the area of project management, finance and procurement and are now doing a deep dive looking into some of the recurrent issues. The latest JIU report found 4 overarching issues. These were around manuals and guidelines, decentralisation and insight, fragmentation of responsibilities, and case load increases.	8, 13, 29, 43, 55-57, 63, 65-66, 75, 104
MI 4.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.6: Policies and procedures effectively prevent, detect, investigate and sanction cases of fraud, corruption and other financial irregularities	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: A clear policy/guidelines on fraud, corruption and any other financial irregularities is available and made public	4
Element 2: The policy/guidelines clearly define/s the roles management and staff roles in implementing/complying with them	4
Element 3: Staff training/awareness-raising has been conducted on policy/guidelines	4
Element 4: There is evidence of policy/guidelines implementation, e.g. through regular monitoring and reporting to the governing body	4

Element 5: There are channels/mechanisms in place for reporting suspicion of misuse of funds (e.g. anonymous reporting channels and "whistle-blower" protection policy)	4
Element 6: Annual reporting on cases of fraud, corruption and other irregularities, including actions taken, and ensures that they are made public	4
MI 4.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
A Policy to address Fraud and corruption is publicly available through UNOPS' website which states the organisation is "…*committed to preventing, identifying and addressing all alleged acts of fraud or corruption against UNOPS and/or its activities*…". The policy is intended to ensure compliance with other UNOPS guidelines too such as UNOPS Financial Regulations and Rules, the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (OI Policy to address Fraud and Corruption, 2018). It states that it will be enforced through awareness raising "*of fraud and corruption risks, implementing controls aimed at preventing it, and establishing procedures for detection, investigation and reporting"* (OI Policy to address Fraud and Corruption, 2018). The Policy has a section on responsibilities which outlines the role of managers and personnel as well as other groups (i.e. the organisation, other UNOPS personnel and vendors). According to the policy, fraud and corruption constitute misconduct that may be subject to disciplinary measures including dismissal. Managers are expected to prevent and detect fraud and corruption through putting in place preventative controls including risk management and are held accountable if they fail to take appropriate actions or tolerate and condone fraudulent/corrupt activities (OI Policy to address Fraud and Corruption, 2018). Documentation states that all personnel and UNOPS personnel have a duty to immediately report any suspicions to their supervisor and there is evidence that personnel training and awareness raising has been conducted on policy and guidelines via mandatory online training courses and the running of workshops. The mandatory fraud awareness training was launched for all personnel in 2017 (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS) and was completed by 571 people that first year. (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017). An online course on ethics and fraud prevention in procurement was also developed, mandatory for members of Contract and Property Committees (CPC), procurement authorities and reviewers, to help them understand the risks, red flags, and consequences, when vendors engage in fraud and other proscribed practices. 'Standards of conduct' workshops have trained participants on how to spot potential issues and report them (Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p18; The UNOPS management response to the 2019 annual reports on internal audit, investigations and ethics, p66). There is close monitoring of the risk of fraud and ethical misconduct through the Quarterly Business Reviews. The 2020 Q1 QBR, for example, includes a section on "Corporate Risk: Top 6 Heat map", where fraud and ethical misconduct is reported with a rising red flag, compared to previous quarter. The assessment relates to concern that *"Fraudulent or unethical behaviour by UNOPS personnel (e.g. conflict of interest, misappropriation of resources) and/or by vendors / implementing partners engaging in proscribed practices (e.g. human rights abuses, SEA, child labour, environmental hazards) may lead to financial, reputational and legal consequences for UNOPS".* The policy to address Fraud and Corruption mandates the ED to "*report cases of fraud and corruption or presumptive fraud and corruption in the financial statements, providing a brief description of each occurrence and the amounts of financial losses sustained by the Organisation, if any*" (OI Policy to address Fraud and Corruption, 2018). The 'Executive Director's Report of Cases of Misconduct that Resulted in the Imposition of Disciplinary and Administrative Measures In 2017' provides evidence of the fraud	2-4, 8-9, 58, 66-69, 75, 103

policy implementation through summarising of cases and the action taken. The Annual Report of the IAIG provides an overview of its investigations including those related to fraud. In 2019 for example it stated that "*UNOPS recovered USD 125 275 of misappropriated funds in 2019 based on investigations conducted by IAIG, of which USD 18 385 related to 2019 investigations and USD 106 890 to investigations of previous years"* (Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p13). Mechanisms and channels for reporting suspicion of misuse of funds are in place, such as an external whistle-blowing hotline established in 2019 by the Ethics Office and IAIG for personnel to report suspected misconduct, including allegations of retaliation against whistle-blowers. (Activities of the UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office in 2019, p9), and an online reporting tool "Reporting Wrongdoing" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p17). Personnel interviews note a consistent level of awareness from personnel of these mechanisms. Given that *"all UNOPS personnel have a duty to report suspected wrongdoing"* (OD Human Resources, Ethics and Culture), the organisation has a policy in place to protect UNOPS personnel against retaliation for reporting misconduct or for cooperating in an audit or investigation or other authorised fact-finding activity, managed by the Ethics and Compliance Office (OI Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorised audits or investigations or other fact-finding activities, 2018, p5).	2-4, 8-9, 58, 66-69, 75, 103
MI 4.6 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.7: Prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.63**
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statement(s), action plan and/or code of conduct that address SEA are available, aligned to international standards, and applicable to all categories of personnel	4
Element 2: Mechanisms are in place to regularly track the status of implementation of the SEA policy at HQ and at field levels	2
Element 3: Dedicated resources and structures are in place to support implementation of policy and/or action plan at HQ and in programmes (covering safe reporting channels, and procedures for access to sexual and gender-based violence services)	2
Element 4: Quality training of personnel / awareness-raising on SEA policies is conducted with adequate frequency	2
Element 5: The organisation has clear standards and due diligence processes in place to ensure that implementing partners prevent and respond to SEA ***Interpretation:*** *implementing partners equivalent to 'suppliers'*	3
Element 6: The organisation can demonstrate its contribution to interagency efforts to prevent and respond to SEA at field level, and SEA policy/best practice co-ordination fora at HQ	3
Element 7: Actions taken on SEA allegations are timely and their number related to basic information and actions taken / reported publicly	3
Element 8: The MO adopts a victim-centred approach to SEA and has a victim support function in place (stand-alone or part of existing structures) in line with its exposure/risk of SEA	2

MI 4.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
1) The assessment team have noted that UNOPS recognise the difference between PSEA and SH; the former relates to external and the latter to personnel, internally. UNOPS has a 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy', based on UN values which articulates their zero-tolerance policy for SEA and aims to foster "*a safe work environment for both UNOPS personnel and the beneficiaries of UNOPS project activities"* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p3). The strategy *"takes into consideration the international community's focus on the matter as well as the public opinion's demands for strong actions to prevent and fight SH and SEA".* It is based around six guiding principles: Zero-Tolerance, Dignity and Respect, Leadership, Manager's conversations, Manager as a role model, and Keeping abreast of changes. Its stated key intervention areas are Awareness-raising, Evidence-based interventions, Review and data analysis, and Building capabilities. (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p3) and is applicable to all UNOPS personnel. There is an organisational action plan for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) according to the ED's 2020 Annual report, however this has not been viewed by the assessment team, only a template. There is evidence though that regional and country offices are beginning to develop their own action plans: "*The NY office, Asia Regional Office have established their respective regional action plan for PSEA. The UNOPS offices in South Sudan and Myanmar have established their respective country action plans for PSEA.*" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). A template is available for offices to use when formulating their action plan. The Africa region have their own strategy and action plan and whilst interviewees explained that it is mandatory for regions to have action plans, it is at their discretion as to which Country Offices need them; not every country is a priority for a PSEA action plan however it is unclear whether there are any criteria for determining this. 2) At the HQ level, mechanisms are in place to track the status of implementation of the strategy. The strategy indicates that a *"Task Force… will meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the strategy and agree on key implementation milestones".* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p7). Such Task Force consists of Directors of Internal Audit and Investigations Group, Legal Group, People and Change Group, and the Ethics Office. Annexed to the most recent Annual Report of the ED (2020), is an update on activities for the prevention of PSEA (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). At the field level, the generic template for regional/country office PSEA action plans includes space for tracking what the entity is doing, gaps, actions, timeframe and responsible personnel for each key indicator. (SEA Action Plan - Generic Template, p1). According to interviewees, the Internal Audit and Investigation Group (IAIG) is starting to add PSEA into audits, for example in the audits of Haiti and Oman the PSEA focal points were interviewed and a recent Audit of the Amman Operational Hub indicated the date that their PSEA Action Plan was approved by Hub management and stated that *"the Hub Director will review, track and follow up on implementation progress on a quarterly basis"* (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5). 3) At the HQ level there are some human resources in place to support implementation such as the internal Task Force Team who oversee the delivery of the strategy (see element 2) but currently no full time PSEA officer. SEA focal points are also beginning to be established across the organisation who have *"received in-house and external training to help them perform the new function"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p34). This includes at the field/programme level whereby "*PSEA focal points have been formally designated at five duty stations (Jordan, Haiti, South Sudan, DR*	2, 62, 70-75

Congo, Central African Republic)" according to the latest Annual report of the ED. Details of PSEA focal persons (names and contact information) are on display across the UNOPS office in Amman (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5). Interviews at HQ suggested that these are assigned rather than voluntary roles and have ToRs associated with them, but it is not always clear how they translate into an individual's workplan. Field offices have been urged by HQ *to "join the established PSEA local networks and the Community-Based Complaints Mechanisms if existing in the country. Local offices are encouraged to share the best practices with the rest of the organisation."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3) but there is currently no evidence that this has happened/is happening. Interviews at HQ suggested that these are assigned rather than voluntary roles and have ToRs associated with them, but it is not always clear how they translate into an individual's workplan. Field offices have been urged by HQ *to "join the established PSEA local networks and the Community-Based Complaints Mechanisms if existing in the country. Local offices are encouraged to share the best practices with the rest of the organisation."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3) but there is currently no evidence that this has happened/is happening. There is no evidence of there being dedicated financial resources available for supporting implementation of the SEA policy and action plans, and interviews at HQ confirmed that there is no dedicated budget but rather the management budget is used for this. 4) The PSH and PSEA strategy makes reference to 'mandatory training' as part of its awareness raising area of intervention **(**Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p6). All personnel are required to complete the online training course 'Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Personnel' which "…ai*ms to increase knowledge of UN policies on sexual exploitation and abuse, including prohibited behaviour and the consequences and impact of sexual misconduct on personnel, field operations, and host populations*…" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p34). Documentary evidence suggested a completion rate of just under 75% as of March 2020, with some offices such as Columbia, Saint Lucia, Cambodia, Philippines, Laos, and Bangkok Shared Service Centre demonstrating 100% (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p2). This completion rate has since increased. Training workshops have also been held with personnel across the organisation to raise awareness and understanding of what SEA is and how to respond to it, with posters translated into French, Spanish and Arabic distributed to field offices. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p2). PSEA focal points participated in a workshop led by UNFPA in 2019 (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3) but not all PSEA focal points have completed PSEA training for UN agencies i.e. in Amman yet there is commitment for them to participate in the next available UN wide PSEA training. (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5). 5) A key priority set by the Executive Director for 2020-21 was to ensure that *"UNOPS policy governing the framework for the implementation of projects through the award of grants to implementing partners or beneficiaries will include the measures for PSEA so that this will be implemented across the organisation."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3). UNOPS is taking steps to implement the UN Protocol on SEA Allegations involving Implementing Partners. A key indicator (2c) on their action plan template is drawn directly from the protocol and is as follows: *"When working with implementing partners, adequate safeguards are in place and appropriate action is taken related to sexual exploitation and abuse – e.g., screening, cooperative arrangements, monitoring, and termination of arrangements)."* (SEA Action Plan - Generic Template, p1). Document review confirmed that the Asia Region PSEA Action Plan includes this indicator (UNOPS Asia Region PSEA Action Plan 2019/2020)	2, 62, 70-75

Other examples of the organisation having clear standards and due diligence processes to ensure implementing partners prevent and respond to SEA include the Myanmar Country Office's cross-cutting manual for implementing partners, which covers PSEA and promotes partner accountability, and risk assessment workshops conducted with Amman Hub project managers by PSEA focal points and consequent risk assessment logs (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5). Also in Amman, the UNOPS PSEA focal person suggested creating a small working group under the PSEA network to develop a methodology for raising awareness amongst contractors on PSEA but it is unclear whether this has happened yet. According to interviews, contracts for contractors covers PSEA and includes a code of conduct. 6) UNOPS does demonstrate contribution to interagency efforts to preventing and responding to SEA. The PSH and PSEA Strategy indicates one area of intervention as building the organisation's capability *"through actively joining UN System initiatives; exchanging knowledge and information with partners, UN Partners, donor governments and subject matter experts including on self-assessment or training"* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p6). One such initiative has been PSEA focal points participating in the UNFPA led PSEA workshop in October 2019, considered *a good example of inter-agency collaboration in the field of PSEA*. (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3), and, according to interviewees UNOPS is a member of the UN PSEA Task Force led by the Office of the Special Coordinator (OSC), and has engaged regularly in their bi-weekly meetings.. In addition, UNOPS' Internal Audit and Investigations Group is a member of the UN Representatives of Investigative Services who collaborate on PSEA/SH issues, and UNOPS also work with the other agencies by participating in Clear Check, a system to prevent SEA/SH offenders from being rehired. The 2020 Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 indicates that HQ has "*urged field offices to join the established PSEA local networks and the Community-Based Complaints Mechanisms if existing in the country. Local offices are encouraged to share the best practices with the rest of the organisation".* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3) which is in line with key indicator 1.e on the Action plan template "*Best practices and lessons learnt were shared with other UN entities and/or taken on by the entity"* (SEA Action Plan - Generic Template, p1). Specifically, at the field level, Jordan is an example of where UNOPS are part of a PSEA task force, having attended meetings and engaging in formal sharing of PSEA information with Head of Agencies and other PSEA focal points from UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM, and UN women. (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5). Interviews at HQ revealed that interagency training has been done in 'hotspot countries' with UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR. 7) As per the PSH and PSEA strategy, UNOPS *"…monitors its performance on preventing and providing adequate and timely responses to SH and SEA occurrences"* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5). A key indicator, 8.e, on the Action plan template is *"Investigations are commenced within 3 months and information about the outcome is shared with the complainant"* (SEA Action Plan - Generic Template: 1) and the AR action plan notes *"PCG and IAIG are keeping records of all elevated instances and take necessary actions"* (2019 UNOPS AR Action Plan for PSEA, p2). UNOPS provides real-time reports on allegations of SEA to the OSC who provide consolidated reporting on cases annually (Harassment and SEA training workshop (November 2019), p16). UNOPS reports all credible SEA allegations to the Secretary-General's iTracking system on a real-time basis. This information, which includes case status and outcome is publicly available.	2, 62, 70-75

The ED publishes details of allegations of misconduct, including cases of SEA and consequent sanctions taken annually in their report (Harassment and SEA training workshop (November 2019), p15), as evidenced in Annex 5 of the ED's 2020 Annual Report which provides 'Updates on UNOPS Activities for the Prevention of PSHEA' and states that an "*Independent review on SH and PSEA by Deloitte with UNDP and UNFPA was conducted in Q1 2019 and…actions have been implemented to follow their recommendations throughout 2019*". (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). In addition, IAIG has referred suppliers/implementing partners to the Vendor Review Committee for SEA violations (i.e., instances where the organisation has failed to properly report, investigate or handle PSEA violations). These sanctioned vendors are also publicly available. The Annual Report of the Internal Audit and Investigations in 2019 contains a list of 'substantiated investigations cases in 2019' which includes the summary of one SEA case (Annual report of the Internal Audit and 2019 Annex 4 Summary of substantiated investigation cases in 2019, p1). 8) UNOPS documentation speaks in favour of adopting a victim centred approach to SEA, with the PSH and PSEA strategy stating: "*All individuals are treated with dignity and respect. This requires a victim-centric approach focusing on providing victims support in an expeditious and appropriate manner whilst respecting the alleged perpetrator's due process rights. When allegations are corroborated, the organisation will take robust and prompt corrective action.*" (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5; Harassment and SEA training workshop (November 2019), p17). Written guidance provides further evidence of a victim centred approach and corresponding support function, for example the *"Manage Protection of Victims" process in PQMS (UNOPS internal policy tool)* was established in February 2019 and includes the provision of victim assistance (including families, for example, children born as a result of SEA.) There is further intent to strengthen country-level capacity to report complaints and support victims by expanding the internal PSEA community according to Annex 5 of the Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020. Interviews at HQ suggested that direction on how to support victims of SEA are provided by IAIG who have begun to adopt a victim-centred approach through, for example, prioritising these cases, shorter deadlines for opening and completing investigations, and ensuring regular contact with the victim. It was noted in interviews however that there is currently no victim support mechanism in place at the field level due to UNOPS nature of working with partners, and that PSEA focal points work with partner agencies rather to understand their own mechanisms. This is in line with what is indicated in the Amman audit report which suggested there to be "*insufficient understanding of the Community-Based Complaint Referral Mechanism (CBCRM) in Jordan, and that such a mechanism does not include PSEA complaints* – but the *Resident Coordinator office is currently working on establishing a mechanism for the development sector in Jordan*" (IAIG-10003-IAR-2020 Amman, p5).	2, 62, 70-75
MI 4.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 4.8: Prevention of and response to sexual harassment (SH)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statements and/or codes of conduct that address SH available, aligned to international standards and applicable to all categories of personnel	4
Element 2: Mechanisms are in place to regularly track the status of implementation of the policy on SH at HQ and at field levels	3

Element 3: The MO has clearly identifiable roles, structures and resources in place for implementing its policy/guidelines on SH at HQ and in the field: support channel for victims, a body coordinating the response, and clear responsibilities for following up with victims	2
Element 4: All managers have undergone training on preventing and responding to SH, and all staff have been trained to set behavioural expectations (including with respect to SH)	3
Element 5: Multiple mechanisms can be accessed to seek advice, pursue informal resolution or formally report SH allegations	3
Element 6: The organisation ensures that it acts in a timely manner on formal complaints of SH allegations	3
Element 7: The organisation transparently reports the number and nature of actions taken in response to SH in annual reporting and feeds into inter-agency HR mechanisms	3
MI 4.8 Analysis	**Source documents**
1) As indicated in 4.7, UNOPS has a 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy'. A Code of Conduct 'The Model Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN System Events' exists and was included in the PQMS process 'Manage Workplace Environment' as of July 2019 (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, 92). Such conduct is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, to the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, and the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules; and, therefore, constitutes prohibited conduct in UNOPS (Infosheet Workplace Grievances, p1). There is an organisational action plan for Prevention of SH which has been "*distributed to the country offices identified as high-risk duty stations as a result of the UN Safe Space survey to assist these offices with the creation of their respective local action plans*" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). UNOPS offices in Afghanistan and South Sudan have established a country action plan for the Prevention of SH according to the Annual Report of the ED 2020, however the assessment team has not had sight of these or the organisational action plan for prevention of SH. 2) At the HQ level, mechanisms are in place to track the status of implementation of the SEA strategy. The strategy indicates that a *"Task Force (comprising the Directors of Internal Audit and Investigations Group, Legal Group, People and Change Group, and the Ethics Office) will meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the strategy and agree on key implementation milestones". "The organisation monitors its performance on preventing and providing adequate and timely responses to SH and SEA occurrences."* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p7). Annexed to the most recent Annual Report of the ED (2020), is an update on activities for the prevention of PSHEA (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). It states that an "*Independent review on SH and PSEA by Deloitte with UNDP and UNFPA was conducted in Q1 2019 and…actions have been implemented to follow their recommendations throughout 2019*". (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). 3) At the HQ level there are some human resources in place to support implementation such as the internal Task Force Team who oversee the delivery of the strategy. *"UNOPS personnel are equipped with effective tools to create and maintain safe environments and address any concerns related to SH and SEA, including any third parties, especially beneficiaries."* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5).	43, 56, 62, 70-71, 74-78

Although sexual harassment cases are investigated by professional investigators, a dispute resolution and fact-finding mechanism known as the 'Network of Peers' also exists within UNOPS which aims to address internal grievances related to Harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination and support the resolution of such. They serve as an additional source of support to victims and assist them during meetings and other interventions regarding their allegations. Personnel are selected based on their competencies and leadership capabilities to be trained to address sexual harassment and other interpersonal challenges that colleagues may face so that issues are handled by peers in the first instance. Deloitte has recommended this as a best practice. It was intended that a "*new cohort of Network of Peers will be trained in August 2020 to support the resolution of internal disputes related to Harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p2). It is unclear whether there are dedicated SH focal points within the organisation; some interviewees indicated that they are planning to establish such suggesting they do not currently exist, but others talked about them being voluntary roles suggesting they don't already exist, or do not formally exist unlike SEA focal points. Interviewees indicated that UNOPS has established practices on SH such as offering psychological support, coaching, and support in returning to the office. There is no documentary evidence of there being dedicated financial resources available for supporting implementation of the SH policy and action plans and interviews at HQ confirmed that there is no dedicated budget but rather the management budget is used for this. 4) UNOPS *"relies on its leadership approach, its competency framework, and the integrity of its personnel to prevent and combat SH and SEA."* It is expected that *"Managers and personnel have authentic conversations about SH and SEA"* and that *"Senior-most managers act as role models, discussing the topic often, and taking recurrent preventive actions as well as, when required, timely corrective victim-centred actions"* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5). Training workshops have been held to raise awareness and understanding of what SH is and how to respond to it, but it is unclear whether this is with all personnel, just managers, and the number of attendees. (Harassment and SEA training workshop (November 2019), p2)**.** Also IAIG *"has supported management, with workshops on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. These workshops focused on basic principles, case scenarios, and UNOPS response to the Secretary-General's initiatives in both areas"* (Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p17). The PSH and PSEA strategy makes reference to 'mandatory training' as part of its awareness raising area of intervention (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p6) explaining that *"UNOPS personnel shall have the recurrent opportunities to know the rules related to the prevention of SH and SEA"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p3). Interviewees at HQ noted issues related to reporting at the UN System level, and the need for ensuring people are more comfortable with reporting. SH allegations can now be reported confidentially online using the 'Speak Up!' hotline which is hosted on NAVEX Global's secure server and accessible via UNOPS website at https://secure.ethicspoint.eu/domain/media/en/gui/105317/index.html. There is also an email address for reporting internal grievances (including sexual harassment) (Standards of Conduct - Enabling Environments, p45). As mentioned above, a guiding principle from the PSH and PSEA strategy is "*Managers and personnel have authentic conversations about SH and SEA" (*Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5) but interviews didn't reveal further insight into this, and how managers or others have provided advice or helped to resolve issues.	43, 56, 62, 70-71, 74-78

As per the strategy, UNOPS *"…monitors its performance on preventing and providing adequate and timely responses to SH and SEA occurrences"* (Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy, p5).The Annual Report of the Internal Audit and Investigations in 2019 contains a list of 'substantiated investigations cases in 2019' which includes the summary of one SH case (Annual report of the Internal Audit and 2019 Annex 4 Summary of substantiated investigation cases in 2019, p1) and interviews at HQ level revealed that, at the time of interview in late November 2020, two SH cases were currently being discussed and disciplinary action being taken. The ED publishes details of allegations of misconduct, including cases of SH and consequent sanctions taken annually in their report (Harassment and SEA training workshop (November 2019), p15), as evidenced in Annex 5 of the ED's 2020 Annual Report which provides 'Updates on UNOPS Activities for the Prevention of PSEAH' and states that an "*Independent review on SH and PSEA by Deloitte with UNDP and UNFPA was conducted in Q1 2019 and…actions have been implemented to follow their recommendations throughout 2019*" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5, p1). No evidence was found regarding the timeliness of response to allegations. The Annual Report of the Internal Audit and Investigations has a section on sexual harassment (and exploitation and abuse) which states the number of alleged cases in the year (Annual report of the IAIG 2019, p13). It also contains a list of 'substantiated investigations cases in 2019' which includes a summary of one SH case and the action taken (Annual report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group 2019 Annex 4 Summary of substantiated investigation cases 2019, p1). Such allegations feed into interagency HR mechanisms since UNOPS is involved in 'Clear Checks' where findings are recorded, and UNOPS is also a member of the HLCM and CEB HR network where these topics are regularly discussed, and joint initiatives are agreed.	43, 56, 62, 70-71, 74-78
MI 4.8 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, leverage effective solutions and maximise results

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.22**

As a demand driven organisation, UNOPS business plans and portfolio of projects all respond to clearly identified needs and strategies and take as point of departure national strategies and objectives. Whilst the stakeholder perspective is evident in corporate documentation, because of UNOPS business model and practice of being responsible to output level only, end-user considerations are not weighted equally. UNOPS has plural accountabilities, on the one-hand to its commissioning partner(s), and on the other to the beneficiaries or stakeholders of its work (where the two diverge), e.g., end users of UNOPS-built infrastructure. UNOPS has structures and incentives in place for personnel that allow them to invest time and effort in engagement process (i.e., *opportunity; pre-engagement; initiation*) both for partnership and technical personnel.

UNOPS has in most cases a somewhat limited engagement in the design of projects, as a result of the business model. Limited evidence was available to make an assessment on evidence of how operating context may have informed this. In terms of implementation, however, there is clear evidence that reflection points with partners routinely take place and take note of any significant changes in context through progress reporting.

Given UNOPS' mandate to "expand implementation capacity across peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts" UNOPS considers capacity in engagement development from different perspectives. From the perspective of the National Public Partners (NPPs), i.e. how UNOPS can offer support, from implementing partners, where it is considered through the

sourcing process. Formal processes exist to judge institutional capacity, with tools available and used for capacity analysis, including CAT-I and PEAT, plus DRiVE. These tools create detailed action plans, though no evidence was available on whether these are shared widely with DPs. Action plans contain strategies for addressing weaknesses; with reflection points built into the process.

Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for all risk categories, though political risk factors were not captured in risk registered to same extent as other risk categories. Risk of SEA is not yet sufficiently embedded.

UNOPS applies a 'do no harm' approach and thus makes an assessment of the extent to which cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the design. The DRiVE supplier sustainability questionnaire is mandatory and includes 3 direct questions related to gender and 8 indirect questions (e.g., PSEA). The PMM system shows monitoring project success criteria are operationalised through a bespoke monitoring.

UNOPS operates within a formal sustainability framework, with project designs (both their own and the ones from partners) including critical aspects of sustainability and are screened for sustainability considerations. Within CAT-I, (national regulatory capacity) legal and policy sustainability considerations are borne out in practice. Likewise, dimensions of sustainability are considered in self-assessment process to contribute to the GRI reporting; though these are neither independent nor external. Intervention plan addresses shifts in policy and legislation required for sustainability reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner.

UNOPS has internal standards set to track implementation speed (QBR against baseline implementation plans); institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs (e.g. emergency procedures and in PMM flexibility exists to amend to context). Internally, the QBR process benchmarks region performance on implementation speed. Evidence suggests that, in some areas including procurement, procedural delays have hindered speed of implementation.

MI 5.1: Interventions/strategies aligned with needs of beneficiaries and regional/ country priorities and intended national/regional results ***Interpretation: In view of the business model of UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders.' Intervention/strategy is comparable to business strategy.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: The organisation's country or regional strategies refer to national/regional body strategies or objectives ***Interpretation:*** *By country and regional strategies are understood UNOPS business plans and portfolio of projects.*	4
Element 2: Reviewed interventions/strategies refer to the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations ***Interpretation:*** *UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders' in the broad sense.*	2
Element 3: The organisation's country strategies or regional strategies link targeted results to national or regional goals ***Interpretation:*** *Business strategies are consistent with national and regional goals.*	4
Element 4: Structures and incentives in place for technical staff that allow them to invest time and effort in engagement process	4

MI 5.1 Analysis	Source documents
UNOPS' strategic planning cascades from the results targets agreed by the Executive Board as part of the quadrennial planning cycle. Operationally, these are articulated at a regional level as Business Plans; including targets for contribution to organisational results. In dialogue with the region, constituent offices and hubs formulate strategies for contribution to the regional targets. Regional results are aggregated from the results of these country-level units. Reviewed regional business plans either make explicit reference to regional bodies and their priorities, or – at a minimum – indicate that such bodies informed the planning process, without however necessarily providing details. One country strategy reviewed for the assessment, included a results framework with the target that *"UNOPS' programmes and projects align to national strategies and approaches"* (UNOPS Myanmar Strategy 2017-2021, p12). Personnel interviewed were clear on the process, detailing that the country or regional strategy is guided by the SP but based on a SWOT analysis drawing on country analysis, UN Development Assistance Framework, and Common Country Assessment and a key dimension to this work is looking at comparative advantage and relating opportunities and needs to different partners. This then is the basis for strategic consultation with HQ. Project management guidance is clear on the need for projects to align with partner governments' priorities, with an explicit requirement that projects should respond to "national priorities, strategies, and local needs" (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p73). However, neither the reviewed regional business strategies, nor country strategy, made explicit linkages to specific regional or national goals. Given its implementation and service provider mandate, UNOPS has plural accountabilities; on the one-hand to its commissioning partner(s), and on the other to the beneficiaries or stakeholders of its work (where the two diverge), e.g., end users of UNOPS-built infrastructure. In both the reviewed documents and personnel interviews, there is a clear appreciation of this. However, as a project-based (rather than programmatic) organisation, UNOPS' doesn't have a single corporate framework or strategy for reconciling these roles, which vary across engagements and contexts. At a strategic level, UNOPS assesses the extent to which its outputs have responded to the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders through assessing the correlations between the delivery of its services and global need, noting *"a high correlation between UNOPS in-country activities and the challenges of people in different countries and contexts."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes: p5). No equivalent assessment was identified of the relevance of UNOPS ongoing projects or business development ambitions to the needs of beneficiaries. At an intervention (project) level, both UNOPS documentation and personnel emphasise the importance of engaging with stakeholders, from donors, to partners, to beneficiaries and end users. To facilitate this, UNOPS has created a suite of tools, guidelines, and requirements for a consultative project process. These include requirements such as in the Design Planning Manuals for Buildings and Transport Infrastructure, the Procurement Manual and Gender Mainstreaming in Projects Guidelines, as well as tools such as the Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure (CAT-I). Neither the reviewed country strategy, nor the reviewed project documents (for the Sierra Leone Rural Renewable Energy Project (RREP)) directly addressed the needs of beneficiaries or vulnerable individuals, although the latter does discuss the provision of services to end users/beneficiaries. Interviews with UNOPS personnel, especially those at field level, did, however, emphasise a highly consultative and values-driven process, where UNOPS worked closely with "stakeholders with power" (a phrase used by a member of UNOPS personnel to encapsulate donor and government partners) to ensure that services would deliver maximum benefit to "stakeholders without power."	3, 5, 15, 26, 39, 47, 49, 79-83

This narrative was less prominent in the interviews with UNOPS' partners, where partners foremost valued UNOPS for being highly attuned and flexible to their needs and programming. Praise was more forthcoming for UNOPS' technical expertise and delivery, than for a consultative process involving beneficiaries and end users. Interviews with personnel noted two approaches to business development; projects where UNOPS identify the need in the community, do the feasibility assessment, develop a project and try to find a donor for it, and projects where a partner has the idea for a project and brings it to UNOPS where it is often subsequently jointly further developed and designed. Interviews suggested that the former is more expensive, but can be more impactful, the latter is the majority of UNOPS projects. A good example of the latter is an innovative project in Sierra Leone, on solar panels where UNOPS judged the approach to be not sustainable and suggested a modification that also involved a PPP aspect. UNOPS' is clear on the value of the engagement process, through which UNOPS works with a partner to define the scope of, and resources required for, a given project. "*Adequate preparation, planning and understanding of the project scope will facilitate the negotiation with Partners and the subsequent legal formalisation of the project. Most importantly, it is developed in an integrated manner considering all management perspectives to ensure the project is viable in all aspects. Hence, its initiation and implementation can be more efficient and effective, maximising the project output's contribution to outcomes and impacts.*" (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p114). This spans three 'stages' in the Project Management Manual: the opportunity stage, the pre-engagement stage, and the initiation stage. There is accountability to the Project Executive for ensuring that all steps in the pre-engagement stage are undertaken by the Business Developer.	3, 5, 15, 26, 39, 47, 49, 79-83
	Medium confidence

MI 5.2: Contextual/situational analysis (shared where possible) applied to shape intervention designs and implementation ***Interpretation: Intervention is considered equivalent to a UNOPS operational project implemented on behalf of a partner.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.50**
Element 1: Intervention designs contain a clear statement positioning the intervention within the operating context	2
Element 2: Reflection points with partners take note of any significant changes in context	3
MI 5.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS only takes full responsibility for project ('intervention') design where the organisation is commissioned to provide it by the partner. However, as a project failure would be a reputational risk to UNOPS, even if the design was at fault, UNOPS also engage with partners on existing designs and conduct a mandatory design review of all infrastructure projects. The Procurement Manual states that *"successful acquisition of goods, services and works and […] timely implementation of projects or operations […] requires an understanding of the nature of the requirements, the capacity of the contractors, the complexity of the operating environment, the risks involved and the available capacity of UNOPS resources."* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p37), however, it includes no formal requirement to include a context analysis in the project design. The only policy reviewed which includes an explicit requirement to conduct a contextual analysis are the guidelines for gender mainstreaming in projects (2018, p34), which relates only to *"a contextual review of the key gender-based constraints and opportunities specific to the local context."*	26, 37, 81-82, 84

With regards to bilateral partnerships, partner interviewees lauded UNOPS' approachability at country-level, with the ability for ongoing communication throughout a project. Furthermore, UNOPS' Project Management Manual includes significant scope for flexibility, with mechanisms available for changes both within and beyond the legal agreement underpinning a project (see Part II, Requirements, p.23, 93, 95, 97, 99). Whilst few examples of changes in context were identified, in the case of COVID-19, interviewed partners indicated a high-degree of communicativeness and flexibility to adapt projects to the crisis. However, one recurring weakness identified in the partner interviews was a perceived lack of sensitivity to the political context: whilst UNOPS' personnel were commended for their technical expertise, it was perceived that they lacked some of the political skills required to operate in highly sensitive contexts by some partners interviewed. Several partners commented in interviews on UNOPS hesitation or lack of engagement on governance and political issues, issues of context that do shape the possible and potential outcome of each project. Whilst focused on bilateral relationships with commissioning partners, UNOPS does participate in broader partnership and co-ordination fora (which will respond to changes in context). UNOPS is engaged in the UN Country Teams when possible and, in several cases, involved in joint donor-government dialogue processes. Interviewed personnel offered examples of engagement in the UNCT Ghana, and Liberia, and the Middle East region, system-wide co-ordination around the 3RP Regional Refugee & Resilience plan in response to the Syria crisis, and engagement in both donor and national government thematic groups, e.g., health co-ordination in Ghana. The evidence base for this micro-indicator was quite limited; due to the lack of project documentation (which covers only one project), it is not possible to confidently assess intervention designs in practice. Furthermore, whilst partner interviews indicated the existence of reflection points, documentation of these in practice was not available to the assessment team.	26, 37, 81-82, 84
MI 5.2 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

MI 5.3: Capacity analysis informing intervention design and implementation, and strategies to address any weakness found are employed	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: Intervention designs contain a clear statement of capacities of key national implementing partners ***Interpretation:*** *The essence is to judge the institutional capacity to complete a project and as UNOPS is the implementing agency, using vendors to implement the project, the focus shifts to both national partners in general and to vendors as implementing partners to UNOPS.*	3
Element 2: Capacity analysis, from the perspective of using and building country systems, considers resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structure.	4
Element 3: Capacity analysis statement has been jointly developed with country partners and shared with development partners	2
Element 4: Capacity analysis statement includes clear strategies for addressing any weaknesses, with a view to sustainability, where applicable developed jointly with development partners	4
Element 5: Reflection points with partners take note of any significant changes in capacity	4

MI 5.3 Analysis	Source documents
UNOPS often works in multidimensional partnerships, with a donor, a national partner (government, national or local), and contractor(s), with UNOPS at the centre. The capacity of National Public Partners (NPPs) is considered from the perspective of how UNOPS can offer support: "*Does the NPP possess the necessary capacity to meet these priorities? Is the NPP aware of their capacity gaps or do they require support in identifying gaps? How is UNOPS value proposition tailored compared to the NPP doing it in-house?"* (Partner Funding Handbook, p4). The capacity of contractors engaged through the procurement process is considered through the *sourcing* process: market research and advertisement of business opportunities to ensure that *"suitable suppliers [are identified] that could provide required goods, services or works for UNOPS"* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p46). Whilst the importance of capacity analysis is therein emphasised, no formal requirement to document or record this process was identified. This is consistent for example with the reviewed project documents for the Sierra Leone Rural Renewable Energy Project (RREP), which – whilst not including a rationale – notes that *"contractor capacity is an essential element to the successful delivery and a key risk identified to the project […] There is limited experience in Sierra Leone on the installation and commissioning of solar PV mini-grids.* (RREP PID, V2, p30). Tools for capacity analysis were identified for UNOPS' procurement and infrastructure service lines: In the former case, UNOPS presented the Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool (PEAT). PEAT is a diagnostic tool, designed for use with public sector entities, *"identifying possible improvements, which are within the power of the entity to implement"* within procurement (Procurement Advisory Services Factsheet - Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool, p2). This reflects the assessment of national partner capacity, which UNOPS can then supplement and build. Whilst focused on sustainable procurement practices and thus addressed more fully under MI 5.6, DRiVE is a supplier sustainability assessment tool, DRiVE includes a sustainability assessment, inspection and corrective action-planning programme for its suppliers to ensure that they operate responsibly and in accordance with high standards of integrity. DRiVE is developed to provide an insight into how suppliers manage their impact, awareness and the mitigation of supply chain related issues. Building on the provisions included in the UN Supplier Code of Conduct as well as the UNOPS General Conditions of Contract (GCC)., in line with the United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct. For infrastructure, UNOPS consider partner (National Public Partner) capacity through steps in the Design and Planning Manuals for Buildings and Transport Infrastructure and using the Capacity Analysis Tool for Infrastructure (CAT-I). The former of these is predominantly technical in focus, in addition to ensuring that designs conform to high health, safety, accessibility, and environmental standards, the manuals require consideration of current and future partner capacity. For example, *"In some instances, local authorities may not be able to provide water supply, water treatment, solid waste management systems or electrical supply to the site. If, for example, a building needs access to its own water supply (not supplied by the local authority), the design will need to include such provisions*" (Design Planning Manual for Buildings: p29). CAT-I is more holistic, with an aim to *"Identify government's capacity gaps to plan, deliver, and manage infrastructure systems […considering…] status (the existence of crucial processes, documents and skills) and effectiveness (determining if the existing resources are used properly to produce their intended effects)"* (CAT-I assessment manual, p17). UNOPS Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure *"can be done either in partnership with governments or delivered as a paid service to governments."* (CAT-I assessment manual, p6). PEAT, in contrast, is *expert-led* and can only be commissioned, albeit by *"Governments interested to have a diagnosis of the performance of key purchasing entities* […]*; Donors* [for an] *Independent diagnosis of procurement capacity and efficiency of potential beneficiaries;* [or] *Private Sector & Civil Society*	7, 37, 39, 51, 82, 85-87

[as] *public procurement stakeholders."* (Procurement Advisory Services Factsheet - Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool, p2). UNOPS suggest that the CAT-I tool could be used by the UNCT to feed into country-level UN planning (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p2), however there was no evidence of this being done in practice. Both PEAT and CAT-I seek to identify realistic areas of improvements for governments (or, in the case of PEAT, any entities that conduct procurement). The former identifies a *'prioritised list of capacity gaps along with recommended actions'* and the latter *"an action plan in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of processes and procedures in the short, medium, and long-term"* (Procurement Advisory Services Factsheet - Procurement Efficiency Assessment Tool, p2). The reviewed project documentation, for example for the Sierra Leone Rural Renewable Energy Project (RREP), confirms that this importance given to capacity building is carried through into practice; *"UNOPS maintains its commitment to fulfilling international standards, we recognise that capacity of local contractors may not yet be at that level. As contractor capacity is an essential element to the successful delivery and a key risk identified to the project, capacity building is core to our approach. This includes also the capacity the personnel of our contractors"* (RREP PID, V2, p30). This was reinforced by UNOPS personnel, who provided numerous examples of capacity building in projects. Notable are existing medicine procurement engagements in Guatemala and Honduras, and a similar project forthcoming in Mexico, where in addition to UNOPS procuring medicines on behalf of their respective national governments, UNOPS has integrated building national procurement capacity and market development. UNOPS is cognisant of possible shifts in partner capacity: *"UNOPS has developed and implemented a strong partnership management to ensure that partner requirements are met in the short-term and long-term. This includes ongoing adjustment of competences and capabilities in order to fit their partners' needs, today and in the future, successful examples are within HR services and Procurement."* (EFQM Recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p8). This was reflected in interviews with UNOPS' partners, who universally lauded UNOPS flexibility and communicativeness. Additionally, the CAT-I process also recommends that follow-up assessments are conducted, to promote a continuous process of capacity development. Each project has several formal reflection points with partners throughout the engagement and implementation process and the project governance structure itself ensures a close collaboration between UNOPS and its partners. Partner interviews showed an appreciation for these structures. Some stressed as very positive UNOPS's low profile in projects, giving partners and governments the credit for project implementation.	7, 37, 39, 51, 82, 85-87
MI 5.3 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 5.4: Detailed risk (strategic, political, reputational, operational) management strategies ensure the identification, mitigation, monitoring and reporting of risks	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for operational risk	4
Element 2: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for strategic risk	4
Element 3: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for political risk	3

Element 4: Intervention designs include detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for reputational risk	4
Element 5: Intervention design is based on contextual analysis including of potential risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct with respect to host populations	2
MI 5.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
Central to UNOPS' value proposition, as perceived by both personnel and partners interviewed, is the ability to take on complex projects in high-risk environments. Furthermore, due to the self-financed model, UNOPS is directly exposed to any risks it takes on. As such, it is unsurprising that *"the UNOPS leadership has a strong commitment to actively managing risks, including through fostering and reinforcing a culture of accountability, enabled through clear policies and IT tools"* as assessed by the IAIG Audit Advisory Committee (2019, pp.95-99). *"Maintaining an appropriate balance between risk containment on the one hand and the search for innovation and new opportunities on the other, with potential higher risk, is an exercise inherent in the UNOPS business model."* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p24). Moreover, risk management is not seen as synonymous with risk aversion; a fact not only evidenced internally through personnel interviews, but also noted in interviews with partners. UNOPS' willingness to engage with speed and at scale, in the process taking on risk, was seen as a comparative advantage over working with other UN entities and noted consistently by partners. Whilst a relatively small sample of project documentation, risk registers, and strategies were reviewed by the assessment team, these included examples of an assessment of operational, strategic, political and reputational risks with associated mitigations. UNOPS' risk management goes beyond this risk identification and mitigation, however. UNOPS has developed a sophisticated risk management architecture, embedded in a culture which supports innovation. Risk is embedded in all aspects of UNOPS management, from strategic risks related to UNOPS' financial position and capacity, to operational risks at the project-level. Whilst yet to be fully integrated, categorisation of risks by a common taxonomy to permit organisation-level aggregation of risks by type is ongoing, UNOPS have tools, systems, and structures for the management of risks across the organisation. All UNOPS engagements undergo a risk assessment, during the *Opportunity, Pre-engagement, and Initiation Stages* with identified risks included in a risk register in oneUNOPS Projects: UNOPS' enterprise risk management system. Furthermore, all engagements are reviewed by Integrated Practice Advise and Support (IPAS) Legal and IPAS finance. Engagements with high-risk profiles are escalated to the Engagement Acceptance Committee (EAC); a high-level panel – chaired by the Executive Director – which has ultimate authority to make go/no-go decisions based on a strategic view. Above the project level, organisational entities are instructed to *"regularly undertake risk assessments … as a minimum, on an annual basis as an integral part of setting management work plans. Assessments should be reviewed as part of applicable assurance processes (quarterly assurance…"* (OI Risk Management, Sep 2018, p6). At a corporate level, a quarterly risk review is undertaken to assess UNOPS' corporate risks. Reputational risk is considered through the lenses of corruption, due diligence on partners, and adherence to social and environmental regulations. As an ultimate risk buffer, given its' self-financed model, UNOPS Executive Board permits it to hold an *operational reserve* of funding, which can be used to *"protect the organisation and its partners against risks associated with project delivery"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p6).	1, 2, 8, 14-15, 17, 19, 35, 37, 43, 47, 54, 67, 79, 81-82, 88- 92

UNOPS mitigates its risk exposure both through systematic risk management, and through its costing structure, where a risk increment is included in pricing on a project-by-project basis; "*greater complexity or risk would indicate higher indirect costs to UNOPS and therefore a higher management fee, whilst greater volume would indicate lower indirect costs (reflecting economies of scale) and consequently a lower management fee.*" (Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019, p4). Additionally, UNOPS design and planning manuals and procurement manual include risk checklists and suggested mitigations.	
Analysis of political risks was the least evident dimension in UNOPS' policies, and this carried through to reviewed strategies and risk registers. Political risks were identified only in one reviewed regional business plan, despite UNOPS risk management policy including the risk category of *'geopolitical context'*. Moreover, a lack of political savvy among UNOPS personnel, and weak understanding of how to address politically sensitive issues, was raised on several occasions by interviewed partners. Where this was identified, partners considered this to have contributed directly to jeopardise project outcomes. UNOPS architecture for identify and managing risks of PSEA is currently being developed, for instance with the recent introduction of a toolkit for screening implementing partners. The ethics compliance framework remains a work in progress.	1, 2, 8, 14-15, 17, 19, 35, 37, 43, 47, 54, 67, 79, 81-82, 88- 92
MI 5.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 5.5: Intervention designs include the analysis of cross-cutting issues (as defined in KPI 2)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Approval procedures require an assessment of the extent to which cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the design	3
Element 2: Plans for intervention monitoring and *project review* include attention to cross-cutting issues	N/E
MI 5.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
A gender screening is mandatory for all projects that are not purely transactional with the level of risk determined through the screening process itself. A social and environmental screening (which covers both environmental and, to a lesser extent, human rights dimensions) is mandatory for projects deemed 'applicable'. These are projects classed as category two or three (those considered medium-high risk and presenting medium-high project management requirements, such as, technical assistance, project management, and infrastructure). Whereas category one projects (which include services such as procurement, HR contracts, or service contracts) do not need to undergo such a screening. Furthermore, there are strategic initiatives, such as the DRiVE programme which has a section dedicated to gender. Use of the DRiVE supplier sustainability questionnaire is mandatory and includes 3 direct questions related to gender and 8 indirect questions (e.g., PSEA). UNOPS themselves acknowledge, however, that DRiVE is a UNOPS-verified self-assessment tool by suppliers and is thus not independent. On the procurement side, UNOPS' eSourcing platform integrates the Sustainable Procurement Framework, which covers gender, environment, and human rights dimensions. Gender-responsive criteria were integrated in 28% of UNOPS tenders in 2020. UNOPS also has a programme dedicated to diverse suppliers - including Women-owned businesses - called UNOPS Possibilities.	

The evidence base for element 2 is limited. Due to the lack of project documentation (which covers only one project), it is not possible to confidently assess project reviews in practice. UNOPS do have this commitment in policy, however. Per the Project Management Manual: *"success criteria are monitored continuously during the Implementation stage and evaluated at the start of the Closure Stage. For a project to be considered truly successful, it should meet a number of targets beyond the standard expectation of delivery according to time, cost, and quality, as well as contributing to the UNOPS mission. There are 33 UNOPS project success criteria (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p90)* [the sixth of these is] *Core values:* [whether] *the project was the right one for UNOPS:* [based on whether it] • *Contributes to improving lives of the intended beneficiaries* • *Adheres to UNOPS mandate and the UN values* • *Respects and contributes to national ownership* • *Contributes to sustainable development goals and agenda* • *Contributes to gender equality* • [Is] *Accountable for results and resource utilisation"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, pp.90-91).	
MI 5.5 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 5.6: Intervention designs include detailed, realistic measures to ensure sustainability (as defined in KPI 12) ***Interpretation: As a service provider, UNOPS responsibility and liability for the design of projects vary and is laid out in Engagement Agreements, project agreement and project documents. Overall, UNOPS operates on a formal sustainability framework.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Intervention designs include statement of critical aspects of sustainability, including institutional framework, resources and human capacity, social behaviour, technical developments and trade, as appropriate	4
Element 2: Intervention design defines key elements of the enabling policy and legal environment required to sustain the expected benefits of successful implementation	4
Element 3: The critical assumptions that underpin sustainability form part of the approved monitoring and evaluation plan	3
Element 4: Where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the intervention plan directly addresses these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner	3
MI 5.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS sees sustainability as going beyond long-term benefits, to ensuring that those benefits are based on high standards reflecting a holistic view of sustainability. Based on this interpretation, UNOPS corporate documentation places significant emphasis on sustainability considerations. Where UNOPS provides the design for the engagement (either the infrastructure design, or a procurement process; where UNOPS will establish the tender conditions), sustainability is built into UNOPS processes. UNOPS has mandatory sustainability mechanisms and checklists built into its procurement service line, through the Sustainable Procurement Framework, and in its infrastructure designs. UNOPS' Project Management Manual is clear that projects should be high quality and fit for purpose to have *"a higher probability of contributing to enabling positive outcomes*	2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 17, 31, 35-38, 64, 81-82, 85

and impacts, during its useful life." (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p118). Inclusion of sustainability considerations was evident, both in reviewed project documentation, and in interviews with UNOPS personnel and partners. Sustainability considerations include the enabling policy and legal environment at all levels of implementation. UNOPS has both policies and tools to establish and improve national regulatory capacity, such as the Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure (CAT-I). At a subnational-level, UNOPS' procurement procedures provide for support to the development of local markets, where it is assessed that local suppliers would best meet procurement requirements [but the market is inadequate to compete nationally/internationally]. At the supplier level, UNOPS may include '*sustainability considerations*' in its contract management, such as supplier performance monitoring and the *"identification of areas for enhanced sustainability"* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p166). Furthermore, it is developing its DRiVE supplier sustainability assessment, designed to understand and build the capacity of suppliers and markets to deliver to the high sustainability standards sought by UNOPS. Evidence indicates that these legal and policy sustainability considerations are borne out in practice. Reviewed documentation for the Sierra Leone RREP emphasised that *"To ensure the success of the project on a large scale, and to replicate schemes beyond a simple pilot project, it is key that the enabling environment be conducive to the establishment and management of mini-grids. In the absence of an adequate legal and regulatory framework and of sufficient capacity, both in the institution(s) and private sector, it will be essential to provide such support in the form of Technical Assistance.*" as well as identifying steps to achieve this (RREP Project Initiation Document v2, p19). Health supply procurement programmes in Guatemala, Honduras, and prospectively in Mexico all include measures to strengthen markets and the legal environment to permit UNOPS to hand over efficient and corruption-free procurement to the state. The Procurement Manual requires that contracts *"Include relevant sustainability clauses from the tender in the contract. These clauses should be measurable and realistic.*" Furthermore, contracts should *"Include relevant supplier performance evaluation metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) that will be evaluated. The KPIs should link back to key sustainable procurement aspects of the specification or the final contractual commitment made by the successful bidder and should be used to measure essential aspects of a contract.*" (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p166). UNOPS has recently strengthened its corporate sustainability monitoring, with projects completing an annual questionnaire aligned to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability standards. This reporting can then be aggregated and reported on to portfolio or corporate level, and forms part of UNOPS' annual reporting. To date, this remains self-reported at the project level, and is neither independent nor evaluative evidence of sustainability. There is a requirement in the Project Management Manual (Part II.) to 'manage Sustainable Results', as agreed in the implementation plan or a specific Sustainability Plan, if present. There is an open question, however, about how UNOPS integrates sustainability into these implementation plans for other service lines and infrastructure where the design is provided by the partner. Reviewed corporate documentation indicates that there is no requirement to include sustainability considerations, in keeping with UNOPS view that – unless contracted – the organisation is not responsible for project design, nor results beyond output-level. However, in a number of interviews, UNOPS country personnel presented examples of where they had worked collaboratively with partners; both donors and national partners; to refine designs to improve results – even where not contracted to do so.	2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 17, 31, 35-38, 64, 81-82, 85

Interviews with personnel and with partners at country level, showed a mixed picture of how and how much UNOPS engages in the project design with examples of deep engagement at the conceptual stage to being involved in the design stage to varying degree, to contacting donors on behalf of a partner government if there is a need for complimentary work to ensure the sustainability of the project. (Yemen and Jordan). These examples taken together show the extent of UNOPS' flexibility and agility to provide added value and maintain relevance in its interventions.	2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 17, 31, 35-38, 64, 81-82, 85
MI 5.6 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 5.7: Institutional procedures (including systems for hiring staff, procuring project inputs, disbursing payment, logistical arrangements etc.) positively support speed of implementation and adaptability in line with local contexts and needs	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: The organisation has internal standards set to track implementation speed	4
Element 2: Institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs	4
Element 3: The organisation's benchmarks (internally and externally) its performance on implementation speed across different operating contexts	3
Element 4: Evidence that procedural delays have not hindered speed of implementation across interventions reviewed	2
MI 5.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
Timetables for implementation are established on an engagement-by-engagement basis, supported by the oneUNOPS Projects "*scheduling feature that enables engagement and project schedules to be created, with associated tasks, relations and milestones, for the project executive's approval and oversight.*" (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p65). UNOPS tracks speed of implementation against agreed targets as part of its quarterly business review process. These quarterly indicators are distilled and aggregated into overarching corporate performance indicators reported against in the Annual Report of the Executive Director. UNOPS disaggregates its implementation data, including timeliness, by region and service line as part of its Quarterly Business Review Process. Whilst UNOPS' continuous improvement approach commits it to external assessments (e.g., GRI) and meeting external standards (EFQM, ISO9001), no evidence was identified that this includes external benchmarking of implementation speed. Whilst UNOPS process are both stringent and subject to internal oversight, there is also an acknowledgement of the need for flexibility and agility, especially working in challenging contexts. As such, numerous reviewed UNOPS procedures and policies include provisions for flexibility. Centrally are UNOPS *Engagement Acceptance and Procurement Procedures in Response to Crisis Situations* which permit that *"Under emergency situations, simplified processes, in compliance with the procurement principles of UNOPS, can be used. For instance, it is recommended that in such situations priority be given to suppliers experienced in supplying United Nations system entities in emergency operations so as to reduce lead times and the risk of contract failure"* (Budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021, 2019, p9). However, provisions for exceptionally circumstances were also identified in the Design and Planning Manual for Transport Infrastructure, the Procurement Manual, the Sustainable Procurement Framework, and the Personnel Management Framework.	7, 8, 14, 29, 35, 79, 93

Evidence from personnel interviews notes that UNOPS policies and ways of working, including these mechanisms for context-adaptability, allow its personnel to work adaptively. Partner interviews spoke highly of UNOPS flexibility, in particular the willingness of UNOPS personnel at all levels to engage in a consultative process and partnership relationship to determine both appropriate outputs and ways of working to suit the context. Additional reasons given for the positive perception from partners regarding UNOPS' flexibility included rapid internal decision-making, UNOPS' pool and network of expertise, its funding mechanisms and use of long-term agreements. However, the view is more mixed with regards to UNOPS speed of implementation. According to their 2019 partner survey, 78% of respondents were favourable to the statement that *"The UNOPS team responds quickly to requests or issues"* whilst 69% were favourable to the statement that *"The UNOPS team completes milestones in a timely manner"* (UNOPS Partner Survey Presentation June 2019, p13). Furthermore, the UN Board of Auditors found that in 20% of procurement contracts, "*the deliveries were delayed on average by 103 days, whilst in 50 cases delays exceeded 100 days [without agreed extension]"* (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p34). This aligns relatively closely to the experiences of interviewed partners, of whom a third actively praised UNOPS implementation speed, a third experienced delays or considered UNOPS to be slow, and the remaining third either had mixed experiences (i.e., external delays, variation by project) or didn't explicitly raise UNOPS timeliness within the interview. Delays in procurement and recruitment were the most-frequently cited reasons for experiencing delays.	7, 8, 14, 29, 35, 79, 93
MI 5.7 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources ***Interpretation: UNOPS is project-based and non-programmatic, the essence of the KPI thus becomes to capture agility at engagement and project level.***	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.10**

Procedures and tools (including project definition workshops and the CAT-I system) are in place to encourage joint planning and engagement with commissioning partners at project level. Mechanisms, including budgetary, are in place to allow project changes and adjustments when conditions change with detailed change management procedures in PMM. Institutional procedures for revisions permit changes to be made at the appropriate level; this was highlighted both in standard operations, and in the context of UNOPS' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, both in adapting existing projects, and supporting governments in specific engagements to respond to the pandemic.

Corporate documentation contains clear and explicit statements on the unique value added and advantage that UNOPS brings to partnerships including through delivery of projects within its service lines; and more importantly through the ability to flexibly combine them as integrated offerings and specialised solutions. A clear expression of collaborative advantage (i.e. what the partnership can achieve together towards the contribution goals) is less clear. In most cases, resources/ competencies needed for intervention area(s) are aligned; although partner interviews show this is not universally the case. No evidence was available on whether guidance on implementing the Management and Accountability Framework exist and is being applied consistently.

Much of UNOPS' engagement is directly with national governments and UNOPS has clear statement (inc. in SP and PMM) on how the organisation will support principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda. No clear guidance was available for how UNOPS supports development partnerships between countries, though project level evidence is available with examples which have contributed to South-South and triangular cooperation. Evidence exists on how UNOP use country systems through supporting national and local market and where there is positive sustainability impact. Intrinsic to UNOPS' mandate and business model, internal structures and incentives are supportive of collaboration/cooperation with national partners.

Regional and country strategies comprehensively assess the context and possible synergies with development partners. Furthermore, UNOPS has a range of partnership arrangement modalities including Engagement agreements; Collaborative agreements; and Teaming/ Joint agreements which identify possible synergies with development partners and opportunities to leverage and catalytically use of resources. These arrangements clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of the partnership.

UNOPS engages in joint exercises/ mechanisms to the extent and where feasible, primarily focused on planning and co-ordination to support external coherence, but is limited by its service provision mandate, its project-based operation and the uneven geographical footprints.

UNOPs has a clear corporate statement on transparency of information that is aligned to the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Information is available on analysis, budgeting, management in line with the guidance provided by the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Responses to partner queries on analysis, budgeting, management and results are of good quality although responses are not always proactive or in a timely manner according to partners.

The assessment considered community engagement and accountability to end users, rather than specifically accountability to beneficiaries, though no coherence policy or guidelines exist. A Community Engagement Toolkit exists and training has been conducted; though no evidence was found on approval mechanisms to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries are addressed in the intervention.

Participation and engagement with partners in mutual assessment is strong both at the corporate and at project level. Partners are involved with UNOPS in joint performance reviews of interventions at project level, and UNOPS undertakes a biannual partner survey and also regularly consult a client Board.

Statement exists in corporate documentation which recognise UNOPS' role in knowledge production; given UNOPS mandate, this is primarily for lesson learning and sharing good practices as opposed to supporting policy dialogue and/or advocacy.

MI 6.1: Planning, programming and approval procedures make partnerships more agile when conditions change	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: Procedures in place to encourage joint planning and programming ***Interpretation:*** *'programming' as equivalent to engagement.*	4
Element 2: Mechanisms, including budgetary, in place to allow *project* changes and adjustments when conditions change	4
Element 3: Institutional procedures for revisions permit changes to be made at the appropriate level to ensure efficiency	4
MI 6.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS' business development processes include dialogue with partners to frame engagements, *"this may include a formal Concept Note, discussions with the potential partners and other stakeholders as needed to consolidate the intent and content of the opportunity … [or a] project definition workshop"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part II Requirements, pp.27-35). Where UNOPS is contracted to provide the design for an infrastructure project, both collaboration with and approval from partners are mandated in the process. Furthermore, UNOPS' Capacity Assessment Tool for Infrastructure (CAT-I) has been developed so that it can be used *"in a formalised approach [with government partners] when a local office wants to create a close partnership with the local government"* (CAT-I assessment manual, p6). This collaborative approach to planning was reflected in interviews with partners, many of whom explicitly appreciated UNOPS' collaborative engagement and ability to engage experts to develop project designs. This was a recurring comment, made by sister multilaterals, government partners, and NGOs across four of the five regions interviewed.	3, 37-39, 95

UNOPS Project Management Manual notes that *"change is unavoidable in all projects, but it is important that it is controlled"* (Part II, Requirements, p94). Correspondingly, the Manual provides detailed procedures for adapting a project at various stages and to varying degrees (see Part II, Requirements, p.23, 93, 95, 97, 99). Under these, procedures for budgetary amendments and financial amendments are given. Interviewed partners emphasised UNOPS' flexibility and adaptability as key strengths. This was highlighted both in general, and in the context of UNOPS response to the COVID-19 pandemic, both in adapting existing projects, and supporting governments in specific engagements to respond to the pandemic. The abovementioned processes for managing change within UNOPS projects are each accompanied by a clear outline of the responsibilities and accountabilities for the revision. These range from the approval of small changes within contract by technical coordinators to the approval of changes to the legal agreement by the Project Board. UNOPS projects are based on a project document and project agreement, and this contain obligations to submit monthly progress and financial reports which constitute the basis for dialogue and decision-making among the partners, according to several interviewees. Partners interviewed broadly indicated that their main points of contact were in the field, with exceptional contact with headquarters. Partners displayed a varying awareness of the exact level and nature of delegation of authority within UNOPS, crucially however, in all-but-exceptional instances they were impressed by UNOPS flexibility.	3, 37-39, 95
MI 6.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.2: Partnerships are based on an explicit statement of comparative or collaborative advantage i.e. technical knowledge, convening power/partnerships, policy dialogue/ advocacy	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.60**
Element 1: Corporate documentation contains clear and explicit statement on the comparative advantage that the organisation is intending to bring to a given partnership	4
Element 2: Corporate documentation contains a clear and explicit statement on the collaborative advantage that the organisation intends to realise through a given partnership	4
Element 3: Resources/competencies needed for intervention area(s) are aligned to the perceived comparative or collaborative advantage	4
Element 4: Comparative or collaborative advantage is reflected in the resources (people, information, knowledge, physical resources, networks) that each partner commits (and is willing) to bring to the partnership	4
Element 5: [UN] Guidance on implementing the Management and Accountability Framework exist and is being applied	2
MI 6.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
There is a clear internal message within UNOPS that the organisation seeks to work, and be seen, as a partner rather than as a contractor, and interviews with partners indicated that that intent is largely met. Acknowledging that UNOPS implementation mandate and business model does give it the role of contractor, some interviewees considered UNOPS a "technical partner" and expressed appreciation for the mandate and technical capacity of UNOPS, saying that the policy aspects of the work come from the commissioning partners. In other instances, partners interviewed regretted that UNOPS did not add value at the policy level, including having a stronger engagement in the UNCT dialogues with the government.	1, 3, 9, 17, 34, 46, 51, 54, 82, 93, 96, 97

UNOPS strives to be seen as a partner by all of the stakeholders of its engagements. As such, it uses partnership language to describe different relationships; from donors and national governments to sister agencies and organisations that it collaborates with on research projects. For all of these modalities, UNOPS Partner Funding Handbook identifies concepts such as *'value add', 'capacity gaps', and 'comparative advantage'* as *"key considerations"* when entering into a partnership. Tools to support identification of such comparative advantage are provided in the Project Management Manual and Implementation Standards Management Framework (OD Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements, p4). The recently developed Partnership Analysis, Differentiation, and Key Partner Strategy tool sets out a comprehensive approach to key partnership analysis identifying partner strategic priorities and characteristics; highlights UNOPS' differentiated approach though an assessment of alternative providers, where they exist; identifies UNOPS' unique added value and value proposition linked to partner priorities, alongside identifying comparable project examples to identify learning and opportunities for replicable practice. This information is intended to be actively maintained along UNOPS' other partner strategy tools and business intelligence reports.

Reflecting this, partners interviewed seemed clear on UNOPS' comparative advantage in their respective contexts. Some appreciated its technical expertise, such as in procurement or working in conflict settings. Others appreciated its implementing role and behind-the-scenes approach, in contrast with UN sister agencies who were sometimes seen as too eager to imprint both their normative mandate and their logo on donor-funded projects. UNOPS position within the UN was also seen as an advantage; lending it credibility, especially with national government. Whilst UNOPS' personnel saw both ability to operate in challenging contexts and expertise as comparative advantages, they also frequently cited comparatively low costs and quality as UNOPS strengths. The appreciation of these latter facets was more mixed in partner views on quality, and price.

1, 3, 9, 17, 34, 46, 51, 54, 82, 93, 96-97

Collaborative advantage (for UNOPS) is interpreted as *how an engagement, by combining a partner's funds and UNOPS' technical expertise, helps contribute to development outcomes.* This is reflected in the *contribution goals* that UNOPS intends to realise through its engagements, as set out in the Strategic Plan (pp.8-9). UNOPS seeks assurance that a partnership contributes to its mandate through a relevance and due diligence lens; for instance, where undertaking work that is insufficiently related to development would constitute a reputational risk. UNOPS is cognisant of the need to ensure relevance in their engagements, and therefore all engagements of a certain size and scope must be approved by the Engagement Acceptance Committee. However, the process for ensuring that smaller engagements are relevant to UNOPS contribution goals remains more informal and tacit, with interviewees indicating that prioritisation is based on the UN values, and resource capacity.

UNOPS sees itself as providing resources in direct response to the comparative advantage(s) sought by its partners: *"Given the demand driven, self-financing business model, and the organisation's ability to make direct and indirect contributions towards the achievement of all the goals, UNOPS projects by their nature respond to unique circumstances and demands with bespoke solutions. Collaborative partnerships are sought out if and when the right opportunity presents* itself" (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p28).

One caveat, and an issue raised by several partner interviewees, is that UNOPS isn't seen as systematically contributing to strategic-level engagement in country. At an intervention-level, one partner expressed that UNOPS doesn't take a strategic view around the development of an engagement, for example, where a country context was shifting from a humanitarian crisis to a development setting requiring a durable solution. The perception was that, whereas other UN

agencies may have engaged politically to secure the evolution of the engagement, UNOPS doesn't take this strategic/programmatic view. At a country collaboration level, UNOPS' engagement in the UNCT and joint UN effort was in two contexts seen as being undermined by its project-focussed model and its funding model, which doesn't allow it to contribute to joint-UN programmes. One caveat, and an issue raised by several partner interviewees, is that UNOPS isn't seen as systematically contributing to strategic-level engagement in country. At an intervention-level, one partner expressed that UNOPS doesn't take a strategic view around the development of an engagement, for example, where a country context was shifting from a humanitarian crisis to a development setting requiring a durable solution. The perception was that, whereas other UN agencies may have engaged politically to secure the evolution of the engagement, UNOPS doesn't take this strategic/programmatic view. At a country collaboration level, UNOPS' engagement in the UNCT and joint UN effort was in two contexts seen as being undermined by its project-focussed model and its funding model, which doesn't allow it to contribute to joint-UN programmes. Whilst UNOPS considers its personnel as a key asset, partners expressed mixed views as to whether the number, seniority, and skillset of UNOPS personnel provided to their project was sufficient or appropriate. The strength of UNOPS' project teams appeared to vary significantly from country to country. Some teams were lauded as *"competent and experienced"*, *"proactive [and] engaged*, and *having "strong leadership [and] technical competence;* others were deemed *"understaffed",* as having *"Project Management experience … not as strong as they would like it to be",* and *"weak on political analysis."* On balance, UNOPS were seen to have provided sufficient and experienced teams in the majority of cases (33 out of 47 comments by interviewed partners on skill and experience of UNOPS personnel expressed a positive sentiment). However, there seem to be scope to better align teams to the scope and context of the project in some cases (14/47 comments). These findings align with the 2019 Partner Survey run by UNOPS, to which 76% of partners agreed that *"services provided by UNOPS are delivered with a high level of expertise"* (UNOPS Partner Survey Presentation, June 2019, p16), with 18% neutral, and 7% unfavourable to the view. UNOPS welcomes the MAF at a strategic level (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019: pp.1-6) and has included *"provisions that recognised the country representative's relationship vis-à-vis the UN Resident Coordinator under the new Management and Accountability Framework"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p33*)*. Moreover, UNOPS state that Country Directors have mandatory results in their performance assessments relating to UNCTs, in line with the MAF. However, no further guidance on implementing the framework was identified by or provided to the assessment team. It should be noted that UNOPS performance is satisfactory for this micro-indicator on comparative and collaborative advantage, and the average significantly impacted by the lack of guidance on the MAF and its implementation.	1, 3, 9, 17, 34, 46, 51, 54, 82, 93, 96-97
MI 6.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**
MI 6.3 Demonstrated commitment to furthering development partnerships for countries (i.e. support for South-South collaboration, triangular arrangements, and use of country systems)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.75**
Element 1: Clear statement on how the organisation will support principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda (Nairobi Principles, 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	4

Element 2: Clear statement/guidelines for how the organisation will support development partnerships between countries	1
Element 3: Clear statement/guidelines for how the organisation will use country systems	3
Element 4: Internal structures and incentives supportive of collaboration/cooperation with countries, and use of country systems where appropriate	3
MI 6.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
In addition to a statement on collaboration with countries (South-South Collaboration) in the Strategic Plan (2018-2021, p4), UNOPS' Project Management Manual also includes an intervention-level commitment and approach to ensuring that projects *"always contribute to the national strategic priorities and outcomes defined between United Nations and a country"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p14, 72-73). As for explicit guidance, neither a statement nor guidelines for how the organisation will support development partnerships between countries was identified by the assessment team. However, as part of their response to the 2019 QCPR survey, UNOPS highlight numerous project examples which have contributed to South-South and triangular cooperation. For example, *"UNOPS has been supporting the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) on a project-by-project basis for several years and developed a long-term relationship with the Office. UNOPS has been UNOSSC's provider of choice since it was first created as the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. In addition, UNOPS is part of an Inter-agency mechanism that was established by the OSSC, to coordinate with the Office on the preparation of the system-wide strategy as well as contributions to the Secretary-General Report on South-South Cooperation 2019, which was drafted by the UNOSSC. UNOPS also implements several projects funded by Funds managed by the UNOSSC"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p31). Whilst UNOPS does not have clear statement and guidance, there is however significant practice. UNOPS' primary approach to using country systems is particularly clear in procurement through the use and development of local and national markets. Specifically, *"UNOPS shall actively work to increase its sources of supply from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition"*. Whilst "*open international or national/regional competition is the default method of competition [where,* inter alia*] National/regional tenders are typically conducted […] if national/regional sourcing provides demonstrable benefits in terms of reduced environmental impacts, increased national ownership or […] Where goods sourced locally have a positive sustainability impact, e.g., eliminating transportation costs"* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p13, 33, 54). *"UNOPS met its target for procurement with registered local suppliers in developing and fragile states, seeing an increase from a baseline of 51 per cent in 2017 to 61 per cent in 2019"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p1) and several partners interviewed were highly complementary of UNOPS willingness and ability to find and use local suppliers. UNOPS proactively develops partnerships with governments as part of its business development and its structures and incentives reflect this; for instance, establishing the business developer role and the dedicated Partnerships and Liaison Group (PLG). Personnel interviewees related this to UNOPS ambitions to engage 'earlier on and higher up', in a more collaborative approach to working with countries. This is reflected in several of UNOPS capacity assessment tools, such as CAT-I and PEAT, which can be used either collaboratively as a framework for identifying where UNOPS can support governments and country systems. Interviewees provided examples of where this has been done in practice.	1, 3, 17, 35, 38-39, 82
MI 6.3 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 6.4: Strategies or designs identify and address synergies with development partners, to encourage leverage/catalytic use of resources and avoid fragmentation in relation to 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda implementation	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Strategies or designs clearly identify possible synergies with development partners and leverage of resources/catalytic use of resources and results	4
Element 2: Strategies or designs clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of the partnership	4
Element 3: Strategies or designs are based on a clear assessment of external coherence	2
Element 4: Strategies or designs contain a clear statement of how leverage will be ensured	2
MI 6.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
Partner value is a key goal for UNOPS, and drivers for this, identified in the Strategic Plan (p12, para 84) include to engage more strategically, and earlier, with partners in the development process, and higher up in government; and to enhance capabilities for strategic and targeted engagement with country teams. *"In addition to governments and United Nations organisations, UNOPS sees significant potential in the following groups of partners: (a) bilateral donor governments; (b) regional organisations; (c) international financial institutions; and (d) foundations, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. Engagement with these partners will take place at central levels as well as in-country, depending on how the partner is organised"* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, p14, para 108). When developing regional and country strategies, these are based on an analysis of UNOPS strengths and comparative advantage and the agendas and priorities of key stakeholders to help identify the partnerships that may best provide added value. The regional strategy for Africa for example includes the identification of SDGs/sectors and partner priorities and through thorough analysis emerges a view of who to engage with in what area under three categories: build/start, defend/maintain, grow, or reconsider/let go. Key elements in the analysis are opportunities and capabilities, by country, sector and theme, and by service line and type. One example of joint planning for external coherence is the UNOPS-led *"UN efforts in Afghanistan with UNEP, WFP and the World Bank to pioneer the development of a national strategic framework for resilience aligned to the Sendai framework – the global plan on disaster risk reduction."* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p8). Whilst a contracted *engagement agreement* (where UNOPS provides services to a partner) is the main type of partnership undertaken by UNOPS, other partnership modalities are available. These include, *inter alia; framework agreements* (long-term agreements for contracted work), *collaborative agreements* (where UNOPS works with a partner to develop a knowledge product or innovation), and *teaming or joint proposal agreements* (where UNOPS joins with a development partner to fulfil an engagement). For all partnership modalities *"arrangements […] shall only be through formal written legal agreement(s), clearly defining the respective roles, responsibilities and accountability of the parties, including UNOPS cost recovery where applicable."* (OD Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements, p4). Both interview and documentary evidence indicated that, whilst available in policy, these other modalities are used highly infrequently in practice. At project level, of the reviewed documentation, only CAT-I, which includes an analysis of development stakeholders in-country, addresses assessing external coherence. Reflecting this, no evidence of UNOPS assessing the external coherence of projects was identified by the assessment team.	1, 9, 15, 17, 27, 39, 46, 48, 51, 54, 85

Whilst leverage was neither specifically emphasised in corporate documentation, nor by personnel or partners, the reviewed Sierra Leone RREP includes both strategies to ensure leverage and an estimate of the leverage to be attained (RREP Project Initiation Document v2, p19).	1, 9, 15, 17, 27, 39, 46, 48, 51, 54, 85
MI 6.4 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 6.5: Key business practices (planning, design, implementation, monitoring and reporting) co-ordinated with relevant partners	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: Active engagement in joint exercises/mechanisms (planning, co-ordination, monitoring, evaluation) to support external coherence	2
Element 2: Participating in joint monitoring and reporting processes with key development partners	2
Element 3: Identifying shared information or efficiency gaps with development partners and developing strategies to address them	N/E
MI 6.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
[Note that the focus here is on *development partners,* in-keeping with the element wording] Whilst at an intervention-level, UNOPS does not clearly prioritise external coherence, because of its business model and geographical footprint, it does engage more systematically with system-wide discussions and systems to align its direction and processes globally. These activities include: • Participation in global fora and events, including *inter alia* around the G-20 Summit, World Economic Forum, and General Assembly. • Drawing on the UN Data Cube to improve UNOPS' internal data management. • Using the UN Global Marketplace, the United Nations System procurement portal, including relying on the procurement decisions of other UN System organisations. • Aligning the UNOPS Procurement Manual with the "*standardised table of contents for UN procurement manuals, as endorsed by the HLCM Procurement Network, with the purpose of harmonising procurement practices and increasing collaboration among UN entities"* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p12). • Chairing of the High-Level Committee on Management by the Executive Director, since October 2019. • Furthermore, UNOPS *"welcomes the efforts to align frameworks across the UN Data Cube, IATI, and the OECD-DAC reporting"* (Implementation of GA Resolution 72-279 Annual Session 2019, p2) and UNOPS was an early signatory to the UN Mutual Recognition Statement. At country-level, as self-reported; where applicable, UNOPS *"recognise[s] reporting obligations to the UN Resident Coordinator for […] planning, resource mobilisation, [and] programme implementation"* and *"The standard job description for a UNOPS country director include the following relevant provisions: […] Participate actively and effectively in UNCT meetings, and contributes to the formulation and implementation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework/One Programme, Integrated Strategic Framework, and Delivering as One within the country"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p34). Where UNOPS doesn't have a country presence, personnel from the applicable hub office will join the UNCT. Whilst the aspiration to contribute fully to UN co-ordination fora is evident, interviews with both personnel and partners suggested that the success of this is highly context dependent and funding an issue because UNOPS is non-programmatic and funds are generally tied to projects. Partner interviews indicated	9, 13, 17, 36, 38, 46, 51, 82, 95

that UNOPS at times was perceived as somewhat divorced from the UN country co-ordination architecture, yet personnel acknowledged that the relationship with the RC was important to the effectiveness of country cooperation but also explain that each country office is a cost centre and cost centres have to be viable, and do not have resources set aside for this type of activity. Whilst UNOPS Partner Funding Handbook does make clear the need to consider how reporting will be handled within a partnership, there is no requirement that reporting or monitoring be undertaken jointly. *"For collaborative partnerships each partnership is managed by relevant focal points but there is no formal mechanism for separate, partner-focused monitoring and reporting."* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p27). Due to the predominance of the engagement modality as UNOPS method for partnership, where UNOPS works directly with the commissioning partner, rather than in tandem with development partners, there is very limited evidence to assess UNOPS working methods with sister development partners, in policy or in practice. For the same reason; the lack of documented or interview evidence of working methods in partnerships with development actors, the assessment team has low confidence in the strength of evidence for this micro-indicator.	9, 13, 17, 36, 38, 46, 51, 82, 95
MI 6.5 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

MI 6.6: Key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results etc.) shared with strategic/implementation partners on an on-going basis	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.67**
Element 1: Clear corporate statement on transparency of information is aligned to the International Aid Transparency Initiative	4
Element 2: Information is available on analysis, budgeting, management in line with the guidance provided by the International Aid Transparency Initiative	4
Element 3: Responses to partner queries on analysis, budgeting, management and results are of good quality and responded to in a timely fashion	3
MI 6.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
The Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, Annex II (p.3) confirms that UNOPS is 100% compliant with IATI standards. Furthermore, *"Project Data, in a format according to the open data standard established by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), including a list of all the projects implemented by UNOPS, the project name, funding source, partner(s), country of implementation, the total project budget and the amount dispersed may also be displayed"* (OI Information Disclosure, Nov 2019, p4). However, despite this IATI-standard reporting at corporate level, UNOPS 2019 partner survey identified *"quality, timeliness, and relevance of partner reports"* as an area of weakness, with this being considered an *area for improvement* in the corresponding action plan (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, pp.11-14). This aligns with the interview findings of both the JIU, who found that "*UNOPS partners … suggest the following areas for improvement: (a) ensuring timeliness and quality of reporting in accordance with the requirements of partners; (b) reducing delays in recruitment processes; (c) taking a more proactive approach to announcing changes in internal procedures that affect clients' projects;"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p50) This aligns with the views of partners interviewed as part of this assessment: whilst some praised the responsiveness	3, 8, 22, 35, 95, 96

of their UNOPS counterparts, others felt that communication could be strengthened, through increased proactivity of information sharing, especially further into projects' lifecycles. Partner interviews for this work included examples of good communication from UNOPS, and appreciation for the close and regular engagement and the project governance with a steering committee that would generally be well informed of progress and financial matters.	3, 8, 22, 35, 95, 96
MI 6.6 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 6.7: Clear standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiaries implemented ***Interpretation: UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders'.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.80**
Element 1: Explicit statement available on standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiary populations i.e. Accountability to Affected Populations	3
Element 2: Staff guidance is available on the implementation of the procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 3: Training has been conducted on the implementation of procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	0
Element 4: Programming tools explicitly contain the requirement to implement procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 5: Approval mechanisms explicitly include the requirement to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries will be addressed in the intervention	0
MI 6.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS' understands its beneficiaries as falling in two distinct groups; "direct beneficiaries are those deliberately targeted who are expected to obtain specific benefits from the project during its lifespan and/or upon project output(s) handover. Indirect beneficiaries are those who have not been deliberately targeted but still may obtain benefits during the project lifespan or beyond. In essence, all Contractors, Suppliers and Vendors of a UNOPS project can be considered to be 'indirect beneficiaries' whilst at the same time 'direct suppliers.' They are not deliberately targeted but still obtain a benefit from the project, such as increase in revenue for services and goods supplied to UNOPS" (Project Management Manual, Pt I., p130). UNOPS does not use the language of accountability to beneficiaries/accountability to affected populations. It does, nonetheless, draw upon similar concepts in some of its policies and reporting, in particular around stakeholder engagement. Whilst UNOPS has numerous formal and informal mechanisms for engaging with many of the key stakeholders of its projects, such as donors, partners, and national government, in keeping with the spirit of accountability to beneficiaries, UNOPS' engagement with direct beneficiaries, such as end users and affected populations, is considered here. Both corporate documentation and personnel interviewed agreed that *"Community engagement in UNOPS projects can improve the effectiveness of successful project delivery by ensuring that outputs meet community needs and expectations. Engaging local communities also seeks to build the capacity of beneficiaries and promote national ownership"* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p56). Furthermore, UNOPS has a *"'Community Engagement Toolkit', a set of tools which comprises techniques, methods, and templates to guide project teams through the process of engaging local communities throughout the project life-cycle."* (*idem*, p56) and a stakeholder engagement plan	9, 26, 31, 37, 39, 98

is recommended for some projects. *"Local community engagement (e.g., stakeholder panels, committees, community programmes)"* (2019 Sustainability questions, p3) is one of the metrics captured in UNOPS' Sustainability Reporting, which contributes towards reporting in line with GRI Standards. UNOPS has not conducted training on the implementation of procedures for accountability to stakeholders. Several of UNOPS programming tools include measures, and in some cases requirements, for stakeholder engagement. These include the CAT-I, the Design Planning Manual for Buildings, and Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Projects. The core programming tools, UNOPS Project Management Manual and Procurement Manual are however much less explicit in the importance of engaging beneficiaries or affected populations. Whilst the Project Management Manual does include recommendations for stakeholder engagement (see Part II, §4.8.4 in particular), it is not explicit that this should include affected communities, except where they are especially vulnerable. Interviewees rarely talked of the importance of engaging stakeholders and vulnerable individuals, possibly a reflection of the business model, and the notion that UNOPS is responsible only to the level of output of a project. Approval (engagement acceptance) mechanisms do not clearly require an assessment of the extent to which procedures for accountability to stakeholders (as beneficiaries, end users, or affected populations) will be addressed, however *"operations with high risk to communities are reviewed as part of the engagement acceptance process"* (UNOPS Sustainability report, GRI, 2017, p56).	9, 26, 31, 37, 39, 98
MI 6.7 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 6.8: Participation with national and other partners in mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: Participation in joint performance reviews of interventions e.g., joint assessments	4
Element 2: Participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue around joint sectoral or normative commitments	N/A
Element 3: Use of surveys or other methods to understand how partners are experiencing working together on implementing mutually agreed commitments.	4
MI 6.8 Analysis	**Source documents**
At the project level, the project governance ensures regular mutual assessment. Projects are directed by *"a Project Board, which includes representation of the three key stakeholder interests: the Project Executive represents UNOPS, directing the project on behalf of the Engagement Authority; Senior Users represent user groups that will use the project outputs (e.g., Beneficiaries); and Senior Suppliers represent supplier groups that provide resources (e.g., the funding source or other UNOPS entities). Suppliers and users may be represented by the Project Executive in certain projects"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p96). The timings for project board meetings are aligned with the assurance process, so that partners have the opportunity to review the performance of interventions routinely.	2-3, 7, 38

UNOPS undertakes a biennial partner survey, the results of which are analysed and formulated into an action plan to improve UNOPS' working relationships with partners. At a strategic level, the UNOPS Client Board, "*an advisory body allowing key UN and non-UN partners to provide feedback on UNOPS performance"* was established, meeting for the first time in February 2020 and annually hence (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p8). The strong engagement is also acknowledged in the EFQM assessment: *"UNOPS has a clear understanding of its partners needs in the regions. This understanding is based on close relations and regular exchange, supported by findings of the regular partner surveys"* (EFQM recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p15).	2-3, 7, 38
MI 6.8 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 6.9: Use of knowledge base to support policy dialogue and/or advocacy	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**N/A**
Overall MI score	**N/A**
Element 1: Statement in corporate documentation explicitly recognises the organisation's role in knowledge production	N/A
Element 2: Knowledge products produced and utilised by partners to inform action	N/A
Element 3: Knowledge products generated and applied to inform advocacy, where relevant, at country, regional, or global level	N/A
Element 4: Knowledge products generated are timely/perceived as timely by partners	N/A
Element 5: Knowledge products are perceived as high quality by partners	N/A
Element 6: Knowledge products are produced in a format that supports their utility to partners	N/A
MI 6.9 Analysis	**Source documents**
The intent of this MI is to explore an MOs engagement in policy dialogue and advocacy. However, UNOPS' service provider mandate does not support this and its business model provides no resources for this type of activity. Therefore this MI is deemed NA, as also agreed at the inception stage. UNOPS' strategic plan and its corresponding annexes do acknowledge the role of knowledge production and sharing but mainly to support its own services and solutions: *"UNOPS will develop strategic knowledge products for infrastructure, procurement and project management"* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p12), not to support the type of activities usually captured in this MI.	1, 5, 13, 26
MI 6.9 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems geared to managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson-learning

KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function ***Interpretation: UNOPS operates in the strategic plan with two types of goals: contribution goals and management goals; this KPI aims to capture systems and practices in place to meet both types of goals.***	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.49**

UNOPS has a strong corporate commitment to Results-Based Management (RBM), with a progressively improving results culture. Traditionally UNOPS has, by virtue of its service provision mandate, only reported results at output level. However, given the stated contribution goals and in view of emerging pressures to examine higher levels of the result chain prevalent across the development landscape, UNOPS does publish Impact Stories publicly on website. These are based on data verified by partners, but not necessarily independent evaluative evidence. UNOPS has also established a separate initiative: the Social Impact Initiative, S3I. Guidance and tools for applying RBM approaches are available at project level (ref: PMM). Procedures and systems exist to cascade results and targets, but aggregation of results and targets (setting) is tacit in nature. There is no clear, isolated definition of resources allocated to the RBM system; though investment into the oneUNOPS has been significant and work is underway on stronger correlation of global needs and UNOPS contribution, results and knowledge management. No dedicated training has been provided to personnel on RBM, though training on management for effective delivery of the agreed output has through oneUNOPS Projects.

Organisation-wide plans and strategies, included in the strategic plan and regional strategies, are reflected in the balanced scorecard. Whilst both contribution goals and management goals are clearly articulated in the SP, the link between the two is somewhat elusive. Through the business planning exercise, clear alignment and linkages exist between the different layers of the results framework, from project to country and corporate level. The annual reports, including detailed performance assessment annexes, are discussed with the governing bodies and show progress over time and note areas of strong performance as well as deviations between planned and actual results. The strategic plan and regional strategies are updated routinely on a quadrennial basis, with budgeting and business plans updated annually for regions.

Indicators are relevant to expected results to enable the measurement of the degree of goal achievement – results in the management area are clearer than in contribution. Development of baselines are mandatory at project level for measuring management level performance (cost, time, quality, scope and risk and sustainability agreed with partners). At a project level, results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted with partners. At a corporate level, results targets are regularly reviewed through QBR process. Results targets are set through consultation with partners.

The corporate monitoring system is adequately resourced, through the QBR and oneUNOPS. Monitoring systems generate data at output levels of the results chain as well as management goal indicators. Reporting processes ensure data is available for key corporate reporting and planning, including for internal change processes. Given the quantity of performance data produced and used by UNOPS, ensuring data quality has been identified as an area of focus receiving attention through strengthened quality assurance.

Planning documents are based predominantly on financial target agreements; adjustments to interventions are informed by performance data through the Quarterly Status reporting process. At corporate level, management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate: these are transparently applied. Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at country levels most strongly; though more mixed evident at global and regional.

MI 7.1: Leadership ensures application of an organisation-wide RBM approach ***Interpretation: given UNOPS' focus on the output level of the results chain, RBM is interpreted as "management for effective delivery of the agreed output".***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Corporate commitment to a result culture is made clear in strategic planning documents	4
Element 2: Clear requirements/incentives in place for the use of an RBM approach in planning and programming	3
Element 3: Guidance for setting results *and delivery* targets and developing indicators is clear and accessible to all staff	4
Element 4: Tools and methods for measuring and managing results are available	3
Element 5: Adequate resources are allocated to the RBM system	3
Element 6: All relevant staff are trained in RBM approaches and method	3
MI 7.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
Reflecting UNOPS' unique operating model within the UN system, its results management approach and systems are similarly unique: The Strategic Plan forms the cornerstone of UNOPS' results management, centred around two sets of strategic goals and a corresponding indicator framework. These are: a. *"Contribution goals, which express the UNOPS overall value proposition and provide focus for external operational results and impact; and* b. *Management goals, which express the UNOPS ambition for organisational excellence and provide focus for internal management results"* (OD Strategy Setting, 2018, p3). A commitment to managing by both these contribution and management goals is clear: With regards to contribution goals: UNOPS Operational Directive on Strategy Setting mandates that *"the corporate strategy shall lay out what UNOPS, guided by its contribution goals, aims to achieve, including its approach to accounting for external results and contributions to impact"* (OD Strategy Setting, 2018, p4). This is borne out in practice, with a results architecture set out in UNOPS' 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and carried through into the current planning period: "*UNOPS will provide a differentiated account, increasing the transparency of the value it contributes to different parts of the 'overall value chain' … [and] in various 'results-chains', in which it advances achievement of objectives"* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p12). The Strategic Plan recognises that "measuring organisational performance against established standards and objective criteria creates a significant disciplining effect – and commonly understood business intelligence is a strong basis for establishing collective priorities for investment and constructive engagement in continued innovation of the services and delivery platform" (p8). Whereas for management goals *"the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 articulates four management goals that reflect the four perspectives of the UNOPS balanced scorecard: partners, people, process, and finance. As part of the biennial budget estimates for 2018-2019, the related management results framework comprises 47 performance indicators and targets aimed at measuring and reporting on performance and achievements for the biennium"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, Annex II: Results based reporting, p1).	1, 4-5, 7-8, 17, 35, 38, 42, 48, 59, 99

UNOPS reporting on operational results is informed by key definitions in the Results-based Management Handbook published by the United Nations Development Group and the OECD/DAC standard RBM definitions (2002). UNOPS approach to results-based management, including its role in the results chain, is described in Annex II of the UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (DP/OPS/2017/5-Annexes). Noting that UNOPS contributes to programme outcomes in partnership with other entities, achievements in the annual report are measured and reported at the output level. Business intelligence is key for UNOPS given its self-financing model and this has led UNOPS to initiate an improvement of its results measurement to classify output aligned to service lines and type. This will allow a more sophisticated account of UNOPS contribution, for example to associate and correlate UNOPS interventions with SDGs: *"In 2018-2019, demand for activities supporting achievement of Goals 3, 11, 16 and 17 remained particularly strong. Support for the four goals accounted for 65 per cent of gross delivery and 58 per cent of growth"* (Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021, p7). In communicating the value it adds, UNOPS intends to *"more clearly delineate between 'indirect' and 'direct' contributions made to expand partners' implementation capacity – between the 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' it enables – the different ways, in various 'results-chains', in which it advances achievement of objectives."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p12). To note however, that this is till work in progress and systems and transparent reporting not fully in place. There are clear requirements (and tools available) throughout the organisation to manage by the management goals, including with respect to target setting. In line with the interpretation of this micro-indicator on *"management for effective delivery of the agreed output"*, these are the focus herein.	
At the project level, in UNOPS' Project Management Manual, accountability is given for setting, monitoring, and reporting against agreed implementation plans, and course-correcting accordingly. This is managed through a variety of requirements and tools, starting with a baseline *implementation plan*, which should include quality, tolerances, and monitoring. This should be updated and formulated into a *Quarterly Plan* each quarter, to reflect project progress, for review by the Project Board. The Project Management Manual contains general guidance on target setting for engagements. This includes techniques or tools that may be used to review the opportunities that UNOPS is considering engaging in from a results perspective (see pgs. 7, 58). Guidance for the 2021 admin budget and target setting process was issued in June 2020, including various dedicated tools: "*The performance targets of the regions should reflect the ambitions as captured by the submissions of key priorities for 2021. The targets should take into account the duly updated orderbook of pending delivery as well as previous years' performance, particularly in cases of consistent over- or underperformance"* (Guidance for Admin Budgeting and Target Setting, 2021) . At the corporate level, UNOPS benchmarks its performance against international best practice through its *excellence model.* Under this, UNOPS *"seek[s] an external assessment of its performance measured against similar assessments carried out across a range of industries and organisational types. The results of this assessment will be used to support continuous improvement, as a focus for training, and as motivation in the drive to instil a culture of excellence"* (UNOPS Strategic Plan 2014-2017, p20). Considering the adequacy of resourcing of UNOPS results-management system; UNOPS attention to, and investment in, measuring and managing its project and corporate results was clear in speaking to HQ personnel. The organisation has developed, albeit with some components still in progress, *oneUNOPS Projects*. In UNOPS' own words, this platform *"is an enterprise portfolio and project management system that allows UNOPS project managers to better schedule their projects, systemise tasking, record and escalate risks and issues, capture lessons learnt, and monitor actual*	1, 4-5, 7-8, 17, 35, 38, 42, 48, 59, 99

project progress. This also shifts the budgeting for project cost towards an output-based approach to better account for deliverables. Using oneUNOPS Projects, project managers are required to plan and report on completed outputs, with project expenses attributed in accordance with output-based budgeting" (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p1). oneUNOPS Projects provides real-time performance data that is used for quarterly reviews at all levels of the organisation, including the strategic Quarterly Business Review. On this basis, the organisation can identify areas of challenge and provide support to projects experiencing difficulties. Training has been provided to personnel on managing projects through oneUNOPS Projects. However, whilst UNOPS has developed a sophisticated and well-resourced system to manage against its management goals, there is an internal discussion about how best to report and manage against its contribution goals. Whilst historically this was done in terms of the number of outputs provided (i.e., bridges or contracts), this wasn't seen as a compelling case for understanding UNOPS value. Various partial reporting mechanisms and approaches to convey contribution are in evidence, including: • Reporting against sustainability indicators on an annual basis through a Results Based Reporting survey, aligned with the GRI Content Index • An analysis in the Annual Report of the Executive Director of the correlation between UNOPS service provision and global priority needs (e.g., delivery in conflict affected contexts, number of jobs created for women) • A joint study with the University of Oxford to understand the contributions of UNOPS projects to the sustainable development goals. However, as UNOPS personnel acknowledged in interviews, none of these adequately capture the nuance of the balance between UNOPS' contribution and partner-owned results. According to interviews, a 'messaging house' framework is under development to better report UNOPS value, although it was indicated to the assessment team that this will be a communication, rather than a management tool. In general, whilst there is clear commitment from leadership to generating value and results for partners, there is also, according to interviews, more of a "We can do it" culture with a longstanding focus on numbers which has been reinforced by a focus on quantitative aspects and numbers in the reporting practices.	1, 4-5, 7-8, 17, 35, 38, 42, 48, 59, 99
MI 7.1 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.2: Corporate strategies, including country strategies, based on a sound RBM focus and logic	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.60**
Element 1: Organisation-wide plans and strategies include results frameworks	3
Element 2: Clear linkages exist between the different layers of the results framework, from project to country and corporate level	4
Element 3: An annual report on performance is discussed with the governing bodies	4
Element 4: Corporate strategies are updated regularly	3
Element 5: The annual corporate reports show progress over time and notes areas of strong performance as well as deviations between planned and actual results	4

MI 7.2 Analysis	Source documents
UNOPS targets both management goals, which *"express the ambition for organisational excellence, quality and principled performance throughout UNOPS operations"* and contribution goals, which *"express the overall value proposition for UNOPS services"*, both outlined in its Strategic Plan. Progress against the management goals is measured against 47 performance indicators and targets. Progress against contribution goals isn't monitored through a single framework in the same way, but through a number of reports and metrics, including UNOPS Net Promoter Score and revenue targets (which track demand) and, the annual GRI Content Index reporting, which (as tailored by UNOPS) includes 20 performance areas relating to the sustainable development benefits pursued by UNOPS. UNOPS tracks its outputs through a portfolio analysis in its annual report, where outputs are recorded by service line. For UNOPS' management goals, *"the […] Strategic Plan is used by all UNOPS organisational entities to manage their respective portfolios. The UNOPS strategic objectives and ambitions are cascaded down from the Executive Office to each Region which identifies in its Quadrennial Business Plan how it plans to meet and/ or contribute to the 'UNOPS strategic goals' subsequently defining 'regional strategic goals'. These are then cascaded down from each Regional Office to all their respective geographical entities: e.g., each Country Office identifies in their respective annual business plan how they will meet and/or contribute to the 'Regional strategic goals' defining 'Country Office strategic goals'. Then these are cascaded down to sub- portfolios, programmes and projects […]"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part I Guidelines, p58). For reporting against contribution goals, projects complete an output-based reporting survey, these project-level outputs are aggregated directly to complete organisation-level GRI reporting. Linkages between the different layers are clearly established. *"Internally, the strategic goals (contribution and management goals) […] frame the development of business strategies and joint initiatives aligning and integrating efforts at the country, regional and global levels. The UNOPS budget estimates for the first two years of the planning period […] establish overall institutional key performance indicators for its strategic goals. These, in turn, will be operationalised through internal business strategies, compacts, work plans and scorecards, and monitored through dashboards based on real-time data."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Annexes, p8). Responding to this, in 2018 UNOPS *"undertook a business planning exercise across all regions, which applied a data-driven, facts-based approach to identifying priorities and opportunities for UNOPS contribution and support. In a complementary exercise, each region also identified opportunities to strengthen capacities, which help provide further direction for the strategic ambition of strengthening UNOPS delivery platform"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p40). According to interviews such exercises also provide information and performance data that inform footprint and system change. UNOPS' Annual Report and corresponding annexes, which contain performance reporting against both contribution and management goals, are presented to the Executive Board at their annual sessions (see https://www.unops.org/about/governance/executive-board/executive-board-documents). Progress on the 47 management targets is reported annually as part of the annual reporting cycle to the Executive Board, structured around people, process, partners, and finance. UNOPS operates on a quadrennial planning cycle, with both its Strategic Plan and supporting regional Business Plans updated on this basis. Whilst there is no set interval at which management documents must be reviewed, evidence confirms the assertion that *"UNOPS continuously reviews and improves its management model"* (UNOPS Sustainability Report, GRI, 2017, p17), this being reflected in the number of operational directives and instructions updated within the timeframe	1-5, 7-9, 17, 29, 35, 96, 99-100

of this assessment. The only organisational strategy identified with a set review period is the Knowledge Management strategy, which is to be reviewed on an annual basis. Tables 1-4 of Annex II of the Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 transparently report the percentage achievement against each performance indicator, relative to both the baseline and the target for the period.	1-5, 7-9, 17, 29, 35, 96, 99-100
MI 7.2 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.3: Results targets set on a foundation of sound evidence base and logic	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Targets and indicators are adequate to capture causal pathways between interventions and the outcomes that contribute to higher order objectives	N/A
Element 2: Indicators are relevant to expected results to enable the measurement of the degree of goal achievement	3
Element 3: Development of baselines are mandatory for new Interventions	4
Element 4: Results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted when needed	4
Element 4: Results targets are set through a process that includes consultation with beneficiaries ***Interpretation:*** *UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders'.*	3
MI 7.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS only reports results at output level, considering higher-level results to be owned by (and the responsibility of) commissioning partners. UNOPS indicator frameworks for both management and contribution goals reflect this, and as such do not capture pathways to higher order objectives. Nevertheless, in its public-face, UNOPS does use impact terminology. The word 'impact' is prominent on the homepage of the UNOPS website, where there are a number of "impact stories." These are case studies, which showcase the value of a project that UNOPS has conducted with a partner. Impact stories may be developed when a partner has collected impact data as part of a project, which UNOPS then does its best to verify before publishing to publicise how UNOPS work relates to its mission. In interviews, UNOPS personnel justified this terminology as they are public-facing and "not just telling the story of UNOPS, but part of a bigger picture." The other prominent use of 'impact' within UNOPS is the new "investing for impact" initiative, the S3i. In the words of the UNOPS website, *"our Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments (S3I) initiative provides investors with opportunities to generate financial returns, whilst ensuring their contributions are making a positive social, environmental and economic impact*. However, as agreed at the inception phase, as this initiative is in its pilot phase, it is not part of the assessment but does deserve mention as evidence of intentions. Nonetheless, at present, interviewees explained that due to UNOPS business model, at project level M&E is only built into projects (beyond the output level) when partners fund it – UNOPS only has management funds for business development not for M&E of ongoing projects. There are examples however of good M&E systems in projects, for example in Sierra Leone, where household surveys and RCT evaluation have been carried out, for example. UNOPS strategic-level indicators relate to its corporate goals. Tables 1-4 of Annex II of the Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 each address one of UNOPS' management goals, presenting achievement against each indicator, relative to both the baseline and the target for the period.	5, 7, 15, 17, 38, 42, 49, 79, 99

These are stated in percentage terms, allowing measurement of the degree of goal attainment). In the reviewed Regional Business Plans, milestones (expected degree of goal achievement) and corresponding timelines are linked to indicators. UNOPS strategic-level indicators relate to its corporate goals. Tables 1-4 of Annex II of the Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 each address one of UNOPS' management goals, presenting achievement against each indicator, relative to both the baseline and the target for the period. These are stated in percentage terms, allowing measurement of the degree of goal attainment). In the reviewed Regional Business Plans, milestones (expected degree of goal achievement) and corresponding timelines are linked to indicators. UNOPS sense of an intervention-level baseline reflects that UNOPS monitors to output level. The baseline for an engagement is the initial implementation plan; outlining the *cost, time, quality, scope, risk, and sustainability results* agreed with partners. Delivery of outputs is thus measured as delivery against these agreed commitments. Such baseline implementation plans are mandatory for all Category 2 and 3 engagements. They are only recommended for Category 1 engagements as the implementation information may be adequately captured in the agreement for fully transactional engagements. At the corporate level, UNOPS consults its Executive Board on its key performance indicators on a biennial basis. Internally, UNOPS will then operationalise these as part of the annual budget cycle through setting *target agreements* (iteratively set unit-level results targets). At a project level, planning is on a quarterly basis and provides an opportunity to revise the implementation plan. Stakeholders are engaged in the engagement-level target-setting process. However, as donors and/or national partners must develop and sign the contract for UNOPS' work, it is unclear how stakeholders not involved in contracting (such as end-users or affected populations) may contribute to the implementation plan. This may be through the Project Board, which approves the Plan, as "Senior Suppliers and/or Senior Users who might need representation in the Project Board." (PMM, Part II., p34). However, it is not evident whether or how this includes affected communities or end users.	5, 7, 15, 17, 38, 42, 49, 79, 99
MI 7.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.4: Monitoring systems generate high-quality, useful performance data in response to strategic priorities	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: The corporate monitoring system is adequately resourced	4
Element 2: Monitoring systems generate data at output levels of the results chain as well as management goal indicators	4
Element 3: Reporting processes ensure data is available for key corporate reporting and planning, including for internal change processes	4
Element 4: A system for ensuring data quality exists	2
MI 7.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
The UNOPS budget process is based on an RBM approach and according to the Strategic Plan institutional key performance indicators are operationalised through internal business strategies, compacts, work plans and scorecards, and monitored through dashboards based on real-time data (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p15).	1-2, 7-8, 17, 35, 42, 99-100

UNOPS attention to, and investment in, measuring and managing its project and corporate results was clear in speaking to HQ personnel. The organisation has developed, albeit with some components still in progress, *oneUNOPS Projects*. In UNOPS' own words, this platform *"is an enterprise portfolio and project management system that allows UNOPS project managers to better schedule their projects, systemise tasking, record and escalate risks and issues, capture lessons learnt, and monitor actual project progress. This also shifts the budgeting for project cost towards an output-based approach to better account for deliverables. Using oneUNOPS Projects, project managers are required to plan and report on completed outputs, with project expenses attributed in accordance with output-based budgeting"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex II Results, p1). The completion of data in oneUNOPS is mandatory, with both accountability and responsibility assigned to ensure compliance. oneUNOPS Projects provides real-time performance data that is used for quarterly reviews at all levels of the organisation, including the strategic Quarterly Business Review, which tracks performance against the four areas of the balanced scorecard: People; Process; Partners; and Finance, plus Opportunities and Risks. To understand the balance of these results internally, UNOPS categorises all of their project outputs against a set list (of 170), each of which is associated with a service line. In doing this, UNOPS can understand performance both by type of output and across service lines. Beyond projects performance, UNOPS also tracks aspects of corporate performance through the corporate scorecard, including HR metrics (i.e., diversity and gender parity), benchmarking against external standards, and audit recommendation implementation. These are also reviewed as part of the Quarterly Business Review process and contribute to the mid-term review of the strategic plan. UNOPS monitors its sustainability performance through a Results-Based-Reporting (RBR) survey, aligned with the GRI Content Index and not integrated into oneUNOPS Projects. However, the RBR survey and GRI report do not feed into each Quarterly Business Review. However, they do contribute to the mid-term review of the strategic plan. Given the quantity of performance data produced and used by UNOPS, ensuring data quality has been identified as an area of focus receiving attention. Whilst data quality assurance is currently undertaken manually at HQ on an *ad hoc* basis, there is an intention to include assessing data quality as part of the project quarterly assurance process. Personnel also signalled the challenge of inconsistency at project level aggregating to corporate level.	1-2, 7-8, 17, 35, 42, 99-100
MI 7.4 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 7.5: Performance data transparently applied in planning and decision-making	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Planning documents are clearly based on performance data	3
Element 2: Proposed adjustments to interventions are clearly informed by performance data	4
Element 3: At corporate level, management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate	4
Element 4: Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at global, regional and country levels	3

MI 7.5 Analysis	Source documents
Operationally, planning at regional, country, and hub levels is through target agreements, which are focused on financial performance and accordingly set to reflect past financial performance. The process for this is discursive and iterative, between different layers of the organisational structure. Going further, one of the reviewed regional Business Plans; the regional strategic planning tools, did include an analysis of regional capabilities, which informs strengths to be capitalised on and weaknesses to be addressed during the forthcoming planning period (REG AFR Business Plan 2018-21, p22). The following paragraphs each address stages of this process in greater detail, including the planning documents and processes these entail. At project level there is a clear mechanism for performance data to inform short-term planning, with the Project Manager submitting Quarterly Status Reports that are then used by the Project Executive to inform the approval of the Quarterly Plan. This is framed in terms of baseline implementation plan, to permit real-time management against agreed commitments. Moreover, this supports transparency around any revision to that implementation plan as the quarterly status reporting is also used by the Project Executive to approve amendments to the Implementation Plan. Whilst this is an exemplary project-level management framework, one reviewed regional business plan indicated that fully capitalising on it remains a 'management priority': *"Quarterly Assurance process and QBR [are] still not effectively used to trigger action/support to projects and offices and prioritise improvement efforts. [There is a] Need to further develop Quarterly Assurance and QBR to become management tools instead of a risk reporting tools. E.g., facilitate use for updates to partners, senior management conversations and decision-making.* (REG LCR Business Plan 2018-21, p40). Country and regional directors spoke of using their offices' performance to inform its strategic direction; orienting their balance of work between the service lines to build upon strengths. Moreover, one documented example of good practice was identified: as part of the reviewed Africa Region Business Plan, an analysis of current partners, themes, countries, and service lines was undertaken to inform planned business development partner engagement (REG AFR Business Plan 2018-21, p34). Moreover, interviews identified that corporate conversations tend to focus on net revenue and audit findings: with the budget model requiring each cost centre/country office to be viable also comes a strong focus on the financial data and targets and "harsh" reminders are made from HQ level if targets are not met. At central management level, there are two key review points; the mid-term review of the strategic plan, which addresses questions of strategic direction, and the Quarterly Business Review, which assesses performance and priorities. These are both undertaken at Senior Leadership Team level, and are used to inform course correction, strategically and programmatically respectively. Both draw on monitoring data collected against the balanced scorecard, much of which is available as real-time dashboards, drawn from oneUNOPS Projects. The JIU is complimentary of UNOPS' corporate reporting system, labelling it *"another good practice"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p47).	1, 2, 8, 15, 38, 42, 79, 99
MI 7.5 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

KPI 8: The MO applies evidence-based planning and programming ***Interpretation: KPI 8's essence is about accountability and learning - generating evidence of performance and applying it. The issue to consider in MI 8.1 is independence. UNOPS does, in agreement with its Executive Board, not have an independent evaluation function nor any other comparable independent assessment function; nor does it commission independent evaluations. UNOPS does however have systems and procedures in place to meet the learning principle behind KPI 8: to apply evidence-based planning and programming and these are being assessed regularly through the independent EFQM assessments and guided by a knowledge management strategy. It is therefore proposed to interpret this KPI in terms of assessment, knowledge and business intelligence rather than evaluation. With this interpretation, there is limited need for further adjustment as MIs would generally be applicable.***	**KPI score**
Unsatisfactory	**2.45**

The Strategic Plan includes a clearly articulated intent to build on experience and further develop its systems to provide more systematic accounts of its contributions and their effectiveness. These accounts may relate to the context-specific risks people face, country types, and/or the goals countries are striving to achieve. However, practices and systems to collect, analyse and disseminate lessons learnt are currently nascent and more an informal than formal requirement, though significant improvements to the global library for lessons, risks, issues are underway. The feedback loop is currently relatively tacit, and highly contingent on individuals; UNOPS is however initiating substantial improvement in this area. The recent Knowledge Management strategy has at its core the development of a Global lessons-learnt library. Whilst consideration of issues of replicability is noted by personnel, this is nonetheless a welcome addition to UNOPS' more informal sharing of experience. Given the relatively recent attention to this issue, systems and feedback loops are still evolving, and hence no formal tracking and reporting of how lessons inform new interventions exist at present.

With its strong attention to delivering, UNOPS does have a system to identify and track poorly performing interventions, through the QBR process by region at business unit and project level. A process for addressing poor performance exists, though partners note there is not always evidence of use. Responsibility to take action is detailed clearly in PMM; though this does not seem to be universally used.

The intention is to establish a complete and current lessons-learnt repository, and improvements to the global library for lessons, risks, issues is underway. No formal mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learnt internally exists. No formal dissemination mechanism to partners, peers and other stakeholders is available; though evidence of informal mechanisms are present.

MI 8.1: A corporate independent evaluation function exists	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**N/A**
Overall MI score	**N/A**
Element 1: The evaluation function is independent from other management functions (operational and financial independence)	N/A
Element 2: The head of evaluation reports directly to the governing body of the organisation (structural independence)	N/A
Element 3: The evaluation office has full discretion in deciding the evaluation programme	N/A
Element 4: The central evaluation programme is fully funded by core funds	N/A
Element 5: Evaluations are submitted directly for consideration at the appropriate level of decision-making for the subject of evaluation	N/A

Element 6: Evaluators are able to conduct their work during the evaluation without undue interference by those involved in implementing the unit of analysis being evaluated (behavioural independence)	N/A
MI 8.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
N/A	
MI 8.1 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

MI 8.2: Consistent, independent evaluation of results (coverage)	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**N/A**
Overall MI score	**N/A**
Element 1: An evaluation policy describes the principles to ensure the coverage, quality and use of findings, including in decentralised evaluations	N/A
Element 2: The policy/an evaluation manual guides the implementation of the different categories of evaluations, such as strategic, thematic, corporate level evaluations, as well as decentralised evaluations	N/A
Element 3: A prioritised and funded evaluation plan covering the organisation's planning and budgeting cycle is available	N/A
Element 4: The annual evaluation plan presents a systematic and periodic coverage of the MO's interventions, reflecting key priorities	N/A
Element 5: Evidence demonstrates that the evaluation policy is being implemented at country-level	N/A
MI 8.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
N/A	
MI 8.2 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

MI 8.3: Systems are applied to ensure the quality of evaluations	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**N/A**
Overall MI score	**N/A**
Element 1: Evaluations are based on design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented	N/A
Element 2: Evaluations use appropriate methodologies for data collection, analysis and interpretation	N/A
Element 3: Evaluation reports present the evidence, findings, conclusions, and where relevant, recommendations in a complete and balanced way	N/A
Element 4: The methodology presented incudes the methodological limitations and concerns	N/A
Element 5: A process exists to ensure the quality of all evaluations, including decentralised evaluations	N/A
MI 8.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
N/A	
MI 8.3 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

MI 8.4: Mandatory demonstration of the evidence base to design new interventions ***Interpretation: Mandatory demonstration of performance informed new interventions; "intervention" covering both operational projects as well as initiatives aiming to enhance corporate performance.***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**1.60**
Element 1: A formal requirement exists to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new interventions	2
Element 2: Clear feedback loops exist to feed lessons into the design of new interventions	2
Element 3: Lessons from past interventions inform new interventions	2
Element 4: Incentives exist to apply lessons learnt to new interventions	2
Element 5: The number/share of new operations designs that draw on lessons from evaluative approaches is made public	0
MI 8.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
Per the Project Management Manual (Part I, p32,94), *"during the Pre-engagement Stage, project teams must consult lessons learnt and obtain support and advice […] The Business Developer shall be responsible for consulting lessons learnt from similar projects [and] The Project Executive shall be accountable."* Furthermore, Interview evidence did indicate that the practice was widespread within the UNOPS, with interviewees indicating a strong culture of knowledge sharing, albeit one highly dependent on personal networks. However, no evidence was identified by the assessment team which indicates a requirement to demonstrate that this step has been undertaken. Nor was evidence identified to suggest that this step also applies to internal initiatives in addition to engagements. This point is also raised in the EFQM report: *Although the communities of practices provide a basis for knowledge sharing, there seems to be a potential to strengthen the approach and the methodology for knowledge sharing and learning across the organisations. Today knowledge sharing and learning seems to rely still a lot on "knowing each other"."* (EFQM recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p20). The report goes on to suggest that *"UNOPS might consider establishing a reliable and systematic evaluation of the post-project impact on society as a basis for improving the sustainability of activities. Measurement of post-project impact on society could also give valuable input for marketing purposes and thereby strengthen the attractiveness of UNOPS for private funding"* (EFQM recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p27). In addition to this requirement to consult lessons learnt and obtain support, the Project Management Manual also reinforces this learning process by *"making explicit which roles have to be consulted for a specific activity"*, thus allowing knowledge to be held and shared by internal focal points. This is reinforced for example by giving visibility through the addition at the end of each new policy to the responsible person: e.g., *"If you have comments or suggestions for improvement, please contact the Procurement Group (PG), UNOPS HQ, through email: procurement@unops.org."* (Procurement Manual Rev 6.1, p3), this allows for field experience to feed into policymaking, and hence the design of new interventions. Whilst the feedback loop is currently relatively tacit, and highly contingent on individuals, UNOPS is initiating substantial improvement in this area. The recent Knowledge Management strategy has at its core the development of a *Global lessons-learnt library*. This will draw on risks, issues and lessons learnt recorded in oneUNOPS Projects by projects, engagements and business units.	3, 7, 38, 82, 96, 100

The ambition is to go beyond a repository however, to move to a proactive system which will recommend key relevant learnings from similar projects, for instance based on type or context. After action reviews are also a component of the strategy, and they too will feed into the learning library. As a result of an UNBOA recommendation, the PMM requires a mandatory post completion assessment work package for all infrastructure projects to provide information on the use of the asset and any further lessons that may be drawn for future development of similar assets. The extent of compliance with this requirement has not been assessed to date, however, the Project Executive is accountable for its completion. Feedback from interviews showed a dynamic evolution and growing maturity on this issue with personnel mentioning ever increasing attention and new processes and initiatives to strengthen feedback loops and collection and sharing of lessons learnt-, including the lessons of failure. Increasing emphasis is also put according to personnel on seeking and using lessons from other actors, whilst acknowledging that not everything can be generalised – "every hospital is different." The number/share of new operations designs that draw on lessons learnt is neither recorded, nor made public.	3, 7, 38, 82, 96, 100
MI 8.4 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 8.5: Poorly performing interventions proactively identified, tracked and addressed	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.75**
Element 1: A system exists to identify poorly performing interventions	4
Element 2: Regular reporting tracks the status and evolution of poorly performing interventions	4
Element 3: A process for addressing poor performance exists, with evidence of its use	3
Element 4: The process clearly delineates the responsibility to take action	4

MI 8.5 Analysis	**Source documents**
At the corporate level, regular reporting from each cost centre of progress in fulfilling the target agreements using a traffic light system allows easy tracking and identification of poor performance in any business unit. The reporting follows the "people, process, partner, finance" format allows for explaining reasons for performance. (Report on 2020 Target Agreement. This is aggregated in the Quarterly Business Reviews which also include reporting from the oversight recommendations, and is submitted and discuss in the Senior Leadership Team The reporting is dovetailed with a quarterly assurance process. At the project level, UNOPS considers project underperformance through a *risks* and *issues* lens, with responsibilities and accountabilities set out to ensure compliance. Risks are continuously monitored but are not considered inherently problematic. Where a risk is realised, it is denoted an issue. The Project Manager is responsible for the ongoing management of risks and issues, overseen by the Project Executive, who has responsibility to ensure that this is done. As part of this responsibility, the Project Executive must ensure both that *"risks, issues, and lessons are continuously registered in oneUNOPS"* and for completing the oneUNOPS project quarterly assurance process. A limitation of this process however is that, as risk entry in the register is conducted by project owners, the detail of recorded risks and issues can vary. Aware of this risk, UNOPS have offered ongoing training, which interviewees considered to have been a success. This responsibility to monitor and record risks and issues is ongoing, not just when an issue arises. However, where a risk materialises within a project or engagement, an *Exception Report* must b	29, 38, 95

created. Where applicable, to manage the issue, UNOPS' change management processes (see MI 6.1) are invoked, these include both processes and escalation to the appropriate level, relative to the extent of the change. In addition to providing escalation and support functions, risks are categorised in oneUNOPS in line with the balanced scorecard dimensions, and by subcategories thereof (75-76 subcategories, plus *'other'*). This allows risks, issues, and lessons learnt to be aggregated, providing a real-time view of the organisation's risk profile and areas with issues at corporate level. The assessment team were given sight of both example risk registers and the live risk log within oneUNOPS projects. On the whole, partners presented a positive view on UNOPS' ability to address poorly performing interventions, with examples of quick and sufficient remediation of issues provided. However, whilst it was unclear the extent to which the interviewed partners had insight into UNOPS internal mechanisms, some examples were presented where partners had flagged project underperformance both country-level and above, but considered issues only temporarily addressed at best. One partner considered that UNOPS had failed to take clear responsibility or leadership in response to managing challenges around difficulties, people, and government expectations. A highly-positive, and internally lauded, example of project support, including for addressing poor performance, is the Integrated Practice Advice and Support (IPAS) unit. One of IPAS' three main functions is support to operations, whereby through its linkages to policy units, IPAS can both respond to and direct queries from project- and field-level personnel, including Project Managers, to the relevant corporate function. In addition to being able to draw upon the existing project management and performance metrics in oneUNOPS, IPAS are currently developing a system to proactively identify projects which may need support to deliver. UNOPS own partnership survey from 2019 and subsequent action plan UNOPS demonstrate an intention to improve, with a commitment to *"in line with Project Management Manual and Knowledge Management, capture partner lessons learnt and identify corrective actions for continuous improvement"* (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, p19). The Project Management Manual is clear on the responsibility for each step, from risk identification and classification as an issue to the corresponding change management process to address it.	29, 38, 95
MI 8.5 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 8.6: Clear accountability system ensures responses and follow-up to and use of evaluation recommendations	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**N/A**
Overall MI score	**N/A**
Element 1: Evaluation reports include a management response (or has one attached or associated with it)	N/A
Element 2: Management responses include an action plan and/ or agreement clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities	N/A
Element 3: A timeline for implementation of key recommendations is proposed	N/A
Element 4: An annual report on the status of use and implementation of evaluation recommendations is made public	N/A
MI 8.6 Analysis	**Source documents**
N/A	
MI 8.6 Evidence confidence	**N/A**

MI 8.7: Uptake of lessons learnt and best practices from evaluations ***Interpretation: Whilst UNOPS neither conducts nor commissions evaluations per se, it does actively create and maintain a knowledge base, including a knowledge management and sharing strategy (as referenced in, 2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p54).***	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Unsatisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.00**
Element 1: A complete and current repository of evaluations and their recommendations is available for use ***Interpretation:*** *lessons-learnt repository rather than repository of evaluations.*	2
Element 2: A mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learnt internally exists	2
Element 3: A dissemination mechanism to partners, peers and other stakeholders is available and employed	1
Element 4: Evidence is available that lessons learnt and best practices are being applied	3
MI 8.7 Analysis	**Source documents**
Under its 2018 Knowledge Management Strategy, UNOPS is collating the risks, issues, and lessons-learnt mandatorily recorded in oneUNOPS into a global library. Whilst still pending further development and full integration across categories, the library already contains over 6000 risks, 3000 issues, and 3000 lessons learnt. According to the timeline in the accompanying results framework, by 2021 the system would have developed a functionality that pulls information from a variety of system capabilities to enable creation of info sheets/factsheets/project "nuggets", easily exportable into pdf templates for BD purposes (2021) (Knowledge Management Strategy, 2018, p4). The focus of the Knowledge management strategy is on generating lessons from UNOPS projects exclusively and not from external sources, indeed no repository exist for evaluative work on UNOPS implemented projects commissioned by partners and the main purpose of the new knowledge management system seems to be for business development. An intended result of the Knowledge Management Strategy is indeed for *"UNOPS knowledge [to be] leveraged throughout the business development and project lifespan"* with the associated action to develop *"access at the engagement development stage to lessons learnt from related projects, as well as learning from failure and after-action reviews ([timeline by] 2020)"* (Knowledge Management Strategy 2018 Annexes, p5). The 2018 JIU report also stress the importance: *"The four-year knowledge management road map sets the objective of transforming UNOPS into a learning organisation with knowledge management embedded throughout its processes and organisational culture. The ambitious goals of the knowledge management strategy are an important step for building an organisational culture of knowledge-sharing and retention"* (JIU, Review of Management and Administration in UNOPS, 2018, p49). To aid dissemination, each of the recorded risks, issues, and lessons learnt are being categorised, to increase usability. The ultimate ambition is that relevant lessons should be presented automatically at the engagement stage, based on relevant factors such as project type or context. In the meantime, use of lessons-learnt, whilst mandatory, is predominantly through personal networks and direct engagement with others with experience of similar projects. To aid dissemination, each of the recorded risks, issues, and lessons learnt are being categorised, to increase usability. The ultimate ambition is that relevant lessons should be presented automatically at the engagement stage, based on relevant factors such as project type or context. In the	2-3, 8, 15, 17, 40, 82, 96, 100

meantime, use of lessons-learnt, whilst mandatory, is predominantly through personal networks and direct engagement with others with experience of similar projects. Only in one area, gender mainstreaming, does UNOPS have an expressed intent to share [and draw from] operational knowledge externally. No other mechanisms for external dissemination of knowledge were identified by the assessment team. There is limited documented evidence to assess whether UNOPS is applying lessons learnt, especially across the organisation. Interviewed personnel were in agreement that there is a culture of knowledge sharing, and that it is accepted practice within the organisation to reach out to colleagues when developing an engagement. Partners present a mixed view: some identified lesson-learning as an area of weakness for UNOPS, whilst others suggested that, where UNOPS had been unsuccessful in delivering a work package, there was a clear commitment to learning to support the next iteration. *Since 2011 UNOPS headquarters and country offices undergo external assessments to review compliance to the ISO9001 Quality Management standard. In addition, since 2013, UNOPS has also undergone two external assessments of the EFQM, in 2017 achieving a five star "recognised for excellence".* […] *UNOPS regularly reports on the results of these external assessments through the annual report of the Executive Director (ref. DP/OPS/2019/2, paragraphs 57-60)"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p39). Whilst acknowledging that the knowledge-sharing system remains tacit until the implementation of the lessons-learnt library, interviewed personnel were consistent in their view that there is a culture of knowledge sharing, with lessons-learnt and best practices identified through informal internal networks and applied.	2-3, 8, 15, 17, 40, 82, 96, 100
MI 8.7 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient manner

KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.00**

In the absence of independent evaluation and given UNOPS' agreement with its Executive Board to report only to the level of output, the evidence base for this results section is primarily internal and self-reported with less independent, external sources than is usually the case in MOPAN assessments.

According to UNOPS' Annual Report, its Balanced Scorecard, and GRI reporting, the most important sources of evidence, UNOPS achieves the majority of stated output (results) and objectives (contribution goals). Substantial self-reporting by projects at the output level also serve to demonstrate goal achievement, for example: *"60 per cent of relevant UNOPS projects reported a positive impact on local economies".* An important joint study between the University of Oxford-led Infrastructure Transitions Research Consortium and UNOPS supports the correlation of project outputs with SDGs through an indicative model for mapping the benefits of infrastructure projects to which UNOPS has provided services to the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNOPS undertakes self-reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment to output level; both in aggregate and through examples of its contributions to partner projects. According to these data, in 2019, 60 per cent of UNOPS infrastructure projects reported enabling equal access for women, impacting more than 9.3 million women; a significant numbers of contracts were awarded to women-owned businesses and nearly 2 million of the ~5 million days of paid work created for local people by

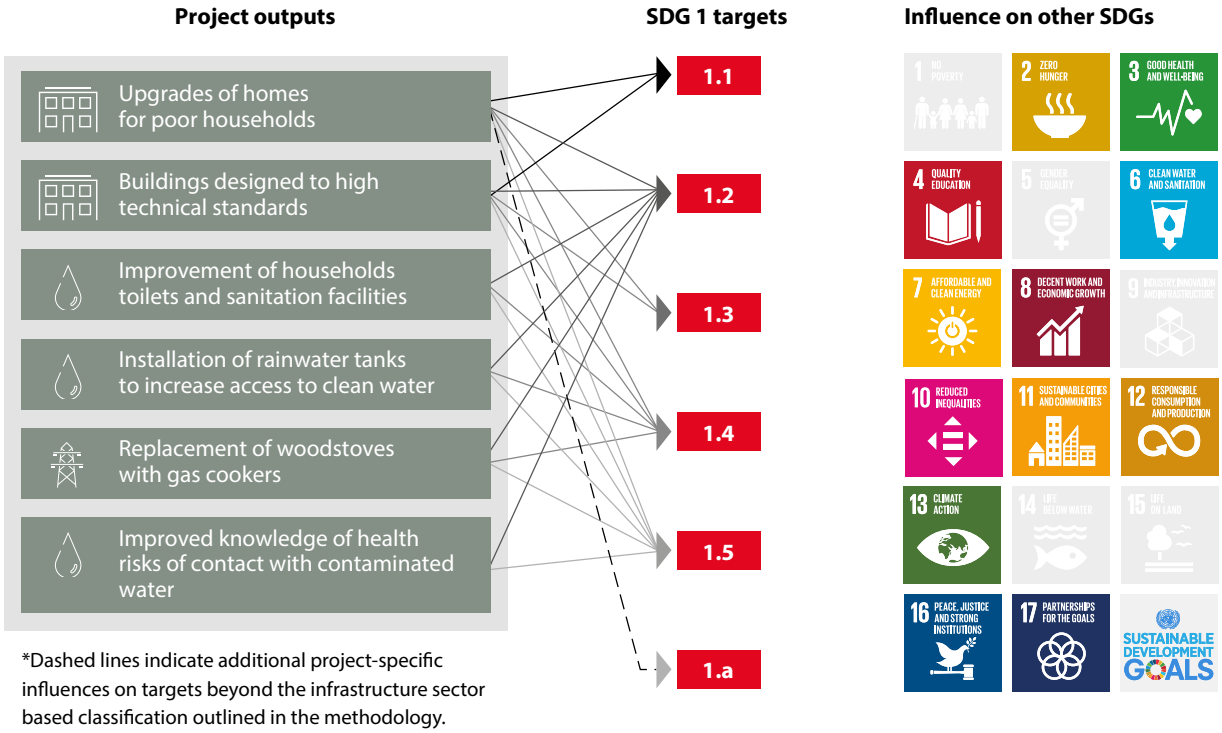
UNOPS in 2019 were for women and young people. These aggregate contributions are supplemented by project-level examples and testimonials throughout UNOPS' reporting.

There is insufficient evidence to assess the extent to which UNOPS' interventions have helped improve environmental sustainability/tackle the effects of climate change, or suggest that UNOPS systematically consider and report on human rights and the protection of vulnerable people in its projects.

MI 9.1: Interventions assessed as having achieved their objectives, and results (analysing differential results across target groups, and changes in national development policies and programmes or system reforms) ***Interpretation: Focus is on operational results linked to the contribution goals and documentary evidence is based on the understanding that UNOPS does not conduct independent evaluation and reports on achievements at the output level only.***	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 9.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS mandate is *"to partner with governments, the United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes, international and regional financial institutions, intergovernmental organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations, the private sector and, more generally, the civil society, to assist in implementing their mandates and achieve their objectives."* (Executive Director Principles, 19th September 2016, p2) and hence, *"UNOPS contributes to programme outcomes in partnership with other entities that report on those outcomes and impacts"* (2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters (2019 QCPR survey), p37). As such, UNOPS results information is therefore available to output level only. In its 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, UNOPS presents *"three strategic contributions goals:* a) *enable partners through efficient management support services;* b) *help people through effective specialised technical expertise*; and *c) support countries in expanding the pool and effect of resources"* (p1). Per MI 7.1, UNOPS reported on these through the Mid Term Review of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and reports regularly through the GRI. Further, the output-based reporting to the Executive Board through the Annual Report of the Executive Director is structured in accordance with the three contributions goals. Different methods are used to report contributions towards the contribution goals. Amongst others, UNOPS for example relies on two key sources of feedback from partners: i) the partner survey and information from a Client Board on the one hand and ii) on the other, the extent of demand for UNOPS services, used as a proxy indicator. To assess progress on this, UNOPS' tracks its Net Promoter Score; the percentage of clients who would recommend their service, minus the percentage who would not. *"Across different categories of partners, the net promoter score is high, regardless of which service line or type they anticipate having in demand. Across the service lines, the breakdown is: infrastructure 43 per cent, procurement 48 per cent, project management 4 per cent, human resources 38 per cent, and financial management 35 per cent. Across the service types, the breakdown is: implementation 43 per cent, transactional 33 per cent, and advisory 51 per cent."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p9). This high recommendation score indicates that UNOPS is seen by partners as adding value, through its services and procedures, implying that it does deliver against its first and third contribution goals. Substantial self-reporting by projects at the output level, also serves to demonstrate goal achievement: *"60 per cent of relevant UNOPS projects reported a positive impact on local economies. […] 55 per cent of relevant projects reported capacity building activities, 47 per cent reported capacity building activities*	1-2, 5, 14, 17, 36, 76, 99

targeting women and 16 per cent targeting people with disabilities. In 2019, more than 19 million people had improved equal access to facilities and/or services due to UNOPS infrastructure projects, of which more than 9.3 million were women and around 37 000 were people with disabilities." (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, pp.13-14) Also, *"UNOPS procured USD 1.1 billion worth of goods and services for its partners in 2019, […] 51 per cent of procurement budgets were awarded to local suppliers, representing over USD 560 million […] USD 7.7 million [0.7% of USD 1.1 billion] of procurement tenders awarded to women-owned businesses and USD 533 million [50% of USD 1.1 billion] to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises."* (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, pp.78-79) These reports are supplemented with numerous project examples through which it has generated such benefits. Furthermore, a joint study between the University of Oxford-led Infrastructure Transitions Research Consortium study (Thacker S, Adshead D, Morgan G, Crosskey S, Bajpai A, Ceppi P, Hall JW & O'Regan N. Infrastructure: Underpinning Sustainable Development. 2018, UNOPS, Copenhagen, Denmark) developed an indicative model for mapping the benefits of infrastructure projects to which UNOPS has provided services to the Sustainable Development Goals. For every SDG, with reference to a specific infrastructure project undertaken by UNOPS, the *"report provides a description of each SDG and an explanation of how it is influenced by infrastructure as a system-of-systems. The inclusion of individual UNOPS projects for each SDG demonstrates the specific contributions that each project makes towards the targets of the SDGs. In addition to the influences made by infrastructure, additional project-specific influences on targets are shown through the use of dashed lines. These findings are summarised across all SDGs and highlight the influence that infrastructure has on supporting global development objectives. The presentation of this evidence highlights the work of UNOPS and its partners in contributing to sustainable development in a range of countries and contexts around the world."* (Infrastructure: Underpinning Sustainable Development, p6). For example:	1-2, 5, 14, 17, 36, 76, 99

Influence of project outputs on SDG 1 targets and other SDGs



*Dashed lines indicate additional project-specific influences on targets beyond the infrastructure sector based classification outlined in the methodology.

(*ibid*, p8).	

The Mid-term Review highlighted the demand for UNOPS services in specific SDG areas: In 2018-2019, demand for activities supporting achievement of Goals 3, 11, 16 and 17 remained particularly strong and the partner survey also illustrated this as "the survey results indicated strong recognition in relation to Goals 3, 9, 11, 16 and 17; and increasing recognition of expertise in relation to Goals 1, 6, 7, 8 and 13. The survey also revealed that more than half of the respondents attached particular priority to Goal 5 'gender equality', confirming the relevance attached by UNOPS to gender mainstreaming in its implementation projects" (Midterm Review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2020, Annexes). The first and third contribution goals, to enable partners through efficient management support services and to support countries in expanding the pool and effect of resources, rely upon UNOPS ability to deliver efficiently in complex and high-risk environments. In interviews, UNOPS personnel justified their contribution against these goals *vis-a-vis* the 'finance' perspective of the balanced scorecard, insofar as if there is demand for UNOPS *"unique value proposition"* this is seen as evidence of UNOPS providing value to its partners.	1-2, 5, 14, 17, 36, 76, 99
MI 9.1 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.2: Interventions assessed as having helped improve gender equality and women's empowerment	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 9.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
As with other facets of its results, UNOPS conducts self-reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment to output level; both in aggregate and through examples of its contributions to partner projects. In 2019, *"Overall 60 per cent of UNOPS infrastructure projects reported enabling equal access for women, impacting more than 9.3 million women."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p38) and *"131 tenders (USD 7.7 million of awarded value [0.7% of total award value]) were awarded to women-owned businesses"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1, p15). Nearly 2 million of the ~5 million days of paid work created for local people by UNOPS in 2019 were for women and young people (Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements and Report of the UN Board of Auditors, p79). These aggregate contributions are supplemented by project-level examples and testimonials throughout UNOPS' reporting. UNOPS reports against only one explicit gender-related target at intervention level, as part of its balanced scorecard: *"Share of country offices that have or are implementing capacity-building initiatives for local/regional suppliers, with a particular focus on traditionally disadvantaged populations (i.e., women or youth owned/controlled businesses)"*, with a target of 25% and a goal achievement of 27%. As part of its Sustainable Implementation Approached Monitoring Framework, UNOPS also tracks and targets the 'share of projects with local community engagement activities for women' and the 'share of infrastructure projects enabling access and use of facilities and/or services for women.' Figures on performance against these targets were available to the assessment team, however. Anecdotal evidence is provided on impact on women such as *'We have never had women working on road construction sites before and UNOPS has shown us that it is possible,' said the Vice President of the Gambia, Dr Isatou Touray. More than 200 local women have been employed in construction works linked to the project – with the labour-based construction team comprising more than 60 per cent*	2, 14, 33-34, 46

women. This is an unprecedented milestone of women participation in rural infrastructure sub-sector in the Gambia, supporting women's empowerment and helping to close the inequality gap in the country. *'In my community, we have always believed road construction to be for men only, so we were surprised when UNOPS offered us the opportunity to work on this project,' said Fatou Sanneh, from Alkali Kunda in the North Bank region of the country."* (Sustainability report 2019, p18). Overall, UNOPS contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment is insufficiently reported to assess here.	2, 14, 33-34, 46
MI 9.2 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.3: Interventions assessed as having helped improve environmental sustainability / tackle the effects of climate change	Score
MI rating	**N/E**
MI score	**N/E**
MI 9.3 Analysis	**Source documents**
Mainstreaming of environmental considerations is covered by UNOPS' sustainable implementation approaches. Under its sustainable implementation approaches monitoring framework, it assesses both mitigation and positive impacts through four operational (plus one corporate) indicators. However, as of the Midterm Review of the current strategic plan, these indicators are only partially populated. The 2019 GRI Content Index indicates that, *"In 2019, [… of] output and sustainability reporting for 983 projects, […] 97 per cent of infrastructure projects reported contributions to sustainability across a range of economic, environmental and social aspects."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 1 GRI Content Index, p37). However, this is not disaggregated by facet of sustainability; it is thus not known how many of these will have resulted in environmentally sustainably/sustainability outputs; examples or case studies are presented throughout UNOPS' reporting, but quantitative data is not provided. Nonetheless, as there is no evidence of degree of goal achievement, it is not possible to assess the extent to which UNOPS' interventions have helped improve environmental sustainability/tackle the effects of climate change.	2, 34, 36, 84
MI 9.3 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

MI 9.4: Interventions assessed as having helped improve human rights, including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being left behind)	**Score**
MI rating	**N/E**
MI score	**N/E**
MI 9.4 Analysis	**Source documents**
For UNOPS, 'human rights' falls under its *sustainable implementation approaches*: *"exercising due diligence and respect for international human rights principles; engaging local communities, with an emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable; facilitating access to food, water, sanitation, energy, health, education, justice, and security-related services; and mainstreaming gender equality in its activities."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p7). UNOPS does not specifically address human rights in its results reporting and within its reporting framework for sustainable implementation approaches, reporting is against "social justice and inclusion" and the focus is on capacity building: Share of projects implementing national capacity-building in project delivery and with targets set for women and. People with disabilities	4, 13

As such, whilst there is anecdotal evidence of human-rights-relevant components to UNOPS projects and policies, there is no evidence to suggest that UNOPS systematically consider and report on human rights and the protection of vulnerable people in its projects.	4, 13
MI 9.4 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate ***Interpretation: UNOPS beneficiaries are considered to include 'stakeholders'.***	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.00**
UNOPS' demand driven business model to some extent assures the organisation of relevance, and with constantly improving business intelligence data, UNOPS is also able to demonstrate how interventions correlate with areas of global priorities and are in areas of partner relevance and aligned to SDGs. The engagement review process further ensures relevance of UNOPS engagement, confirmed by primary evidence which illustrated this with examples of projects that UNOPS had turned down. UNOPS also engages with commissioning partners in the design phase, to varying degrees, to ensure the relevance of the intervention design. UNOPS clearly works in the areas of its mandate, and regularly report on the share of activities within each of its service lines and how these evolve. UNOPS does not systematically track whether the interventions are directly responsive to the needs of end users or affected populations but does provide self-reported examples of projects with UNOPS contributions which are responsive to the needs of end-users/end-beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups.	
MI 10.1: Intervention objectives and design assessed as responding to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities (inclusiveness, equality and Leave No One Behind), and continuing to do so where circumstances change	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 10.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
There are two dimensions through which to assess the extent to which UNOPS interventions are responsive to needs; with respect to its partners (who commission its outputs) and with respect to the end users and stakeholders of its outputs. Against the first dimension, as a demand driven organisation that relies on a management fee from partners to remain in operation, UNOPS projects necessarily respond to the needs of its partners. UNOPS explicitly sees demand for its services as evidence of its relevance to partners and, as such, *"the past two years' growth in demand for its activities testify to [UNOPS'] relevance."* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p78). Based on this perspective, given that 2019-2020 *"saw steady demand for UNOPS services and, for a fourth consecutive year, … saw an increase in the implementation support provided directly to governments, which reached over 40 per cent of the UNOPS portfolio"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020, p1), it is clear that UNOPS is satisfactorily fulfilling this, especially for national public partners. At a very-high level, UNOPS does track its corresponding relevance to the needs of non-partner stakeholders. It does this through tracking alignment with global issues and UN priorities, including the Sustainable Development Goals; assessing the correlations between UNOPS' portfolios and areas of global need. *"In preparing the midterm review, UNOPS conducted a contextual assessment […]. The assessment reconfirmed strong correlations between UNOPS in-country activities and the challenges people face in different countries and contexts; and that the majority of its in-country activities are concentrated in countries ranking low on the human development index and high on the humanitarian risk index."* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Annexes. pp.21-22).	1, 4-5, 34, 36, 81

Similarly, *"A number of country risk indexes exist. UNOPS has assessed its country presence against three of them: (a) the humanitarian risk index, also known as 'INFORM'; (b) the global adaptations risk index, focusing on climate change; and (c) the global conflict risk index. The assessment reconfirms that UNOPS activities are concentrated in countries where people face the highest risks."* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 Annexes, p6). Based on these UNOPS identify, *inter alia,* that: • 53% of gross delivery was in low- and lower-middle-income countries below the median of the human development index. • 46% of gross delivery was in least developed countries. • 16% of gross delivery was in landlocked developing countries. • 2% of gross delivery was in small island developing states (SIDS). • 58% of gross delivery was in low- and lower-middle-income countries with risk levels above the median fragile states index. • 50% of gross delivery was in territories and countries with active state-based conflicts. • 59% of gross delivery was in low- and lower-middle-income countries with risk levels above the median humanitarian risk index. • 50% of gross delivery was in low- and lower-middle-income countries that are below the median climate change adaptation index. • 72% of gross delivery was in the 90 countries below the median corruption perception index. (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-21, Annexes, pp3-4). However, UNOPS do not systematically track whether the interventions in these contexts are directly responsive to the needs of end users or affected populations. UNOPS do provide self-reported examples of projects with UNOPS contributions which are responsive to the needs of end-users/ end-beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups (the UNOPS annual sustainability reporting includes numerous such examples). However, there is neither systematic, nor independent reporting of the relevance of the projects to which UNOPS contributes at the micro- or national- level. In terms of intervention design, as shown in KPI 5 UNOPS in most cases implements based on a concept and a design developed by the commissioning agency, but does engage to ensure this design fulfils a number of criteria. In particular, as per the Design Planning Manuals for Buildings and Transport Infrastructure, emphasis is given to ensuring that the *"short-term and long-term effects of the project must be considered and the local community engaged to better understand the implications of the local context"* (Design Planning Manual for Transport Infrastructure, p57). Moreover, interviews highlighted a number of cases here UNOPS had proposed specific changes to the design and objectives of projects to ensure the relevance and sustainability of the project. Nonetheless, UNOPS interventions respond primarily to partner demands, where these are in line with UNOPS mandate. To ensure this, the engagement review process ensures relevance of UNOPS engagement, confirmed by interviews which illustrated this with examples of projects that UNOPS had turned down. However, in the absence of evaluative work, it is not possible post factum to confirm the relevance of UNOPS engagements to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries.	1, 4-5, 34, 36, 81
MI 10.1 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently ***Interpretation: This KPI is focused on effective delivery of output consistent with treatment throughout this document.***	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.00**

UNOPS's efficient and streamlined business practices, consistent with the requirements of the EFQM model for excellence, and its focus on organisational viability for each business unit supports the efficient delivery of results. UNOPS' business model rests on a principle of full cost recovery for services provided and UNOPS aims to minimise costs to partners, hence for example its average fee of 4.4% is significantly lower overall than other United Nations entities. UNOPS operates based on an external benchmark of 8% indirect cost but the complexity of some of UNOPS' projects however pose a challenge in meeting this benchmark. Feedback from partner interviews showed mixed knowledge and understanding of the pricing model.

As recognised in the most recent EFQM assessment report, UNOPS excels for speed in setting up project teams and provide resources for achieving high standards of delivery and safety. Delivery efficiency is therefore an area of considerable strength, even in the most difficult contexts, and is closely tracked and monitored through the Project Quarterly Assurance and Quarterly Business Review processes. UNOPS acknowledge, and are seeking to remedy, known areas where timeliness could be improved. This positive assessment was confirmed in partner interviews where implementation capacity was one of the key strengths mentioned.

MI 11.1: Interventions/activities assessed as resource-/cost-efficient	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 11.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
At the corporate level, UNOPS works on a basis of trying to minimise costs to partners. Each country office is a cost unit and has to be viable and new offices are only opened where the volume of work makes them self-sustained. UNOPS maintains a large network of non-staff experts, for instance on retainer contracts, which allow the organisation to flex its footprint and, accordingly, its costs in response to need. UNOPS work towards a target of *zero-net revenue*, implying that its indirect operating costs should be covered through management fees. This is the basis of UNOPS self-financing model. However, the target was not met over the year ending 31 December 2019: "*The [UN] Board [of Auditors] noted that, in its budget estimates for the bienniums [sic.] 2018–2019 and 2020–2021, UNOPS set a target of zero net revenue for itself in line with the financial regulation mandating full cost recovery. […] UNOPS did not implement its target of zero net revenue as directed by the Advisory Committee.*" (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, p18). At the project level partners pay fee and cost and UNOPS works on a full cost-recovery basis with issues raised by the UN Board of Auditors that *"64 (21 per cent) of the 298 engagements finalised in 2019 included indirect costs in excess of the external benchmark of 8 per cent […] UNOPS agreed that some of its engagements were priced above 8 per cent, but emphasised that its pricing policy prescribed full cost recovery, including scenarios in which the indirect fee was above 8 per cent, which was often reflective of the complexity of the engagement. UNOPS also pointed out that, with an average fee of 4.4 per cent, it was providing significantly lower charges to partners overall than other United Nations entities."* (Financial report and audited financial statements and report of the UN Board of Auditors, pp.20-21) However, as no evaluative evidence of efficiency is available, UNOPS own partner survey is a good estimation of whether costs are appropriate, as perceived by partners. Whilst a majority of UNOPS' partners in the 2019 survey were favourable to the view that "UNOPS services are value for	14, 17, 95

money compared to other implementing partners" (55%), this was also the weakest metric of the 2019 partner survey, with 32% of partners neutral, and 13% of partners unfavourable to the view (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, p5). This figure has improved slightly in the most recent survey. The qualitative responses to the survey portrayed a similar mixed picture: *"Partners describe UNOPS with the below positive words and phrases:* • *Most common positive include Efficient, Professional, and Responsive.* • *Constructive feedback was framed using terms such as Bureaucratic, Expensive, and Slow."* (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, p7). Feedback from partner interviews showed mixed knowledge and understanding of the pricing model.	14, 17, 95
MI 11.1 Evidence confidence	**Low confidence**

MI 11.2: Implementation and results assessed as having been achieved on time (given the context, in the case of humanitarian programming)	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 11.2 Analysis	**Source documents**
UNOPS internal tracking identifies that 17% of engagements were amended for time in the first half of 2020, against a target of 21% (Quarterly Business Review 2020 Q2, p16). It should be noted that this figure includes amendment for time at the request of the partner. As of 2021, this is now disaggregated. This broadly reflects the opinions of partners who, as surveyed in for the 2019 partner survey, strongly agreed with the statement "the UNOPS team completes milestones in a timely manner" (69% favourable, 19% neutral, 12% unfavourable) (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, p5). This result was one of the five weakest areas within the survey for UNOPS, however, with improvement potentially possible in 31% of cases. Much as for cost efficiency, the qualitative responses to the partner survey portrayed a similar mixed picture: *"Partners describe UNOPS with the below positive words and phrases:* • *Most common positive include Efficient, Professional, and Responsive.* • *Constructive feedback was framed using terms such as Bureaucratic, Expensive, and Slow."* (Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan, p7). UNOPS acknowledge, and are seeking to remedy, known areas where timeliness could be improved, with the project management manual noting that *"Particular care is needed with reporting obligations as it has been a continuous source of negative feedback to the organisation regarding meeting our obligations for timely effective reporting"* (Project Management Manual (PMM), Part II Requirements, p83). Broadly, however, speed of implementation is an area of strength for UNOPS, as reflected by the 2017 EFQM report: *"Looking at the operational delivery of projects in the regions, UNOPS shows an outstanding performance with respect to speed and flexibility in setting up and realising a project whilst keeping high safety and security levels."* It continues, *"Even under the most challenging conditions, UNOPS excels for speed in setting up project teams and resources and for achieving high standards of delivery and safety"* (EFQM recognised for Excellence Feedback Report, 2017, p6, 9).	7, 29, 33, 38, 95
MI 11.2 Evidence confidence	**Medium confidence**

KPI 12: Results are sustainable ***Interpretation: UNOPS reports on sustainability inter alia using the Global Reporting Initiative.***	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.00**
Many of UNOPS' sustainability results are generated by its working methods; for example, its sustainable procurement practices, which in 2019 received a fourth consecutive gold-level award from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, indicating recognition of its contribution to building capacity in this area. In general, capacity building is a key element of sustainability and an embedded aspect of all UNOPS work, as evidenced in the GRI reports which document UNOPS' contribution to local capacity building activities. In the infrastructure service line, for example, 97 per cent of infrastructure projects reported contributions to sustainability across a range of economic, environmental and social aspects. Despite meeting most internal sustainability-related targets in 2018, UNOPS, regressed on some through 2019 according to self-reporting. However, numerous examples of self-reported sustainability contributions are included in the 2020 Annual Report, and annual sustainability reporting indicating further progress has been made in this area.	
MI 12.1: Benefits assessed as continuing, or likely to continue after intervention completion (Where applicable, reference to building institutional or community capacity and/or strengthening enabling environment for development, in support of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	**Score**
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**
MI 12.1 Analysis	**Source documents**
In 2019, UNOPS sustainable procurement practices received a fourth consecutive gold-level award from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply; it is the only organisation to have accomplished this. By the end of 2019, UNOPS had made its sustainable procurement framework mandatory." (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p165) Capacity building is a key element of sustainability and an embedded aspect of all UNOPS work, Per the 2019 GRI report, *"around 88,000 people benefitted from local capacity building activities of UNOPS projects, of which 35,000 were women and around 1,500 people with disabilities. Overall, 55 per cent of relevant projects reported capacity building activities […]. As part of sharing UNOPS knowledge and expertise, almost 29,000 days of technical assistance were provided to partners in 2019 (down from 31,000 in 2018)"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, Annex 1 GRI Content Index, pp.13-14). Based on its annual reporting, UNOPS sees the majority of its project work as having contributed to sustainability, referencing *"sustainability reporting for 983 projects, in which 97 per cent of infrastructure projects reported contributions to sustainability across a range of economic, environmental and social aspects"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, p3). UNOPS contributes to sustainability through both the outputs it provides, and its organisational processes through which it provides them. Many of UNOPS' sustainability results are generated by its working methods: • *"In 2019, UNOPS sustainable procurement practices received a fourth consecutive gold-level award from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply; it is the only organisation to have accomplished this. By the end of 2019, UNOPS had made its sustainable procurement framework mandatory."* (Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p165).	1-2, 4, 9, 34-36

- *"UNOPS management support services, which are certified against internationally recognised standards, have intrinsic value for its partners regardless of which goals are being pursued"* (The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, p6).
- *"At least half of relevant UNOPS projects reported contributions to sustainability through their implementation approaches. This included positive impacts on local economies, capacity-building initiatives, and/or local community engagement. UNOPS met its target for procurement with registered local suppliers in developing and fragile states, seeing an increase from a baseline of 51 per cent in 2017 to 61 per cent in 2019"* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, Annex II Results, p1).

Despite meeting the majority of internal sustainability-related targets in 2018, UNOPS did however regress on some through 2019:

1-2, 4, 9, 34-36

Goal	Driver	Performance indicator	2017 baseline	2018-19 targets	2018 results	2019 results
A. Partner Value	A1. Manage partner value	Share of projects reporting positive impacts on local economies	60%	60%	66%	60%
		Share of projects reporting implementation of capacity-building initiatives in project delivery	57%	60%	61%	55%
		Share of projects reported with local community engagement, impact assessment, and development programmes	65%	65%	63%	50%
		Share of relevant new infrastructure implementation projects that include risk-informed effective design and implementation considerations that contribute to resilient outcomes	28%	100%	44%	40%

(Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, Annex II Results, p2)

Goal	Driver	Performance indicator	2017 baseline	2018-19 targets	2018 results	2019 results
C. Process excellence	C3. Innovate services and delivery platform	Share of country offices that have or are implementing capacity-building initiatives for local/regional suppliers, with a particular focus on traditionally disadvantages populations (i.e., women or youth-owned/controlled businesses)	14%	25%	18%	27%

(Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019 Annex II Results, p6)

In addition, narrative evidence is provided that many of the projects which UNOPS' contributes to have themselves sustainability components, e.g. *"In Serbia, the 'EU PRO' programme worked to strengthen social inclusion and cohesion, and to improve the capacity of 99 local self-governments throughout the country. Started in 2018, the three-year programme contributes to attracting investments, creating jobs and increasing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. […] By December 2019, the programme had allocated almost €20 million to 246 projects that had reached almost 60,000 beneficiaries and created over 200 jobs."* (Annual Report of the Executive Director 2019, p5). Numerous additional examples of self-reported sustainability contributions are included in the 2020 Annual Report, and annual sustainability reporting.

There is a significant and serious caveat to this broadly positive outlook, however. Whilst UNOPS' projects and processes both place emphasis on sustainability, their short-term nature and the fact that UNOPS does not conduct (its own) evaluations means that there is no evidence to assess whether benefits have, in practice, continued after intervention completion.

MI 12.1 Evidence confidence — **Low confidence**

Annex B. List of documents

No.	Document title
1	The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. DP/OPS/2015/5
2	Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020: Annex 1 - GRI Content Index 2019. DP/OPS/2020/4
3	UNOPS Project Management Manual. Part 1: Guidelines. 2019
4	Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. DP/OPS/2020/5
5	Annexes: The UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. DP/OPS/2017/5 - Annexes
6	Executive Office Instruction Ref.EOI.ED.2019.01. Organisational Structure
7	EFQM recognised for Excellence Feedback Report: United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). 2017
8	Review of Management and Administration in The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). JIU/REP/2018/3
9	UNOPS Sustainability Report 2017: GRI Content Index. 2017.
10	UNOPS Net Assets. DP/OPS/2020/CRP.1
11	UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19. 2020
12	End Stage Report of the COVID-19 Response Global Task Force. 2020
13	Annual Report of the Executive Director. DP/OPS/2020/4
14	Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 and Report of the Board of Auditors. A/75/5.Add.11
15	AFR Business Plan 2018-2021: Focused Growth, Diversification & Operational Excellence. 2018.
16	Report on Q3 2020 Target Agreement: Q3 2020 Report on Target Agreement. RP, Africa region.
17	2019 Survey of UN Agencies' Headquarters. 2019.
18	Working together to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Joint annex on the common chapter of the strategic plan 2018-2021 of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women. 2019.
19	United Nations Office for Project Services budget estimates for the biennium 2020-2021. DP/OPS/2019/6
20	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2013. DP/2014/2
21	Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020. Annex 3: Financial Highlights
22	Operational Instruction Ref. OI.LG.2019.02: Information Disclosure
23	Operational Directive REF.OD.EO.2018.01: Value Proposition and Cost Recovery Model
24	Guidelines for S3I Operations. 2020
25	Decisions adopted by the executive Board at its annual session 2020. DP/2020/19
26	UNOPS Gender Mainstreaming in Projects: Guidelines. 2019.
27	Gender Mainstreaming Strategy. Enhancing gender equality through UNOPS projects. 2018
28	Enhancing gender equality in projects action plan. 2018
29	Quarterly Business Review Q2/2020 : Preliminary financial performance data as of 06 Jul 2020
30	Gender Mainstreaming Strategy Action Plan, 2018
31	Infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women. 2020.

No.	Document title
32	Executive Office Directive REF.EOD.ED.2017.03: Occupational Health & Safety, Social & Environmental Management. 2017
33	Impact UNOPS Sustainability Report 2018.
34	Only by bringing everyone to the table can we address everyone's needs. 2019.
35	Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020. Annex II: Results-based Reporting. DP/OPS/2020/4-Annexes
36	Annexes: Midterm review of the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. DP/OPS/2020/5 – Annexes
37	Design Planning Manual for Buildings: Technical framework for minimum requirement for infrastructure design. 2014.
38	Project Management Manual. Part II: Requirements. 2018.
39	CAT-I Assessment Manual. No date.
40	Gender Parity Strategy. 2018
41	DRiVE. No date.
42	Operational Directive REF.OD.ED.2018.01: Strategy Setting
43	UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee: Annual Report 2019. DP/OPS/2020/2 – Annex 3.
44	Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 72/279 on "Repositioning of the UN Development System": Addendum to the Information Note of the Annual Session 2019. Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS – Second Regular Session 2019.
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48	UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Sustainability, Focus & Excellence.
49	2018 to 2021 Business Plan: Asia Region
50	Operational Instruction Ref. OI.PLG.2019.01: Acceptance of Framework, Collaborative and Teaming Agreements
51	Partner Funding Handbook: Business Development Considerations for different funding modalities. No date.
52	Guidance Note on the 1% Levy and its inclusion in partner negotiations. 2020
53	Executive Operational Instruction REF.EOI.ED.2018.02: Delegation of Authority and Accountability Framework
54	Operational Directive REF.OD.EO.2017.02: Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements
55	Operational Instruction Ref. OIPCG.2017.01: Personnel Management Framework
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59	Guidance for Admin Budgeting and Target Setting. 2021

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60	Executive Office Instruction Ref.EOI.LG.2019.02. Policy and Process Management
61	Quarterly Business Review Q3/2020: Preliminary financial performance data as of 21 Oct 2020
62	Internal Audit Report of the Amman Operational Hub. IAIG/10003. 2020.
63	Quarterly Business Review Q1/2020: Preliminary financial performance data as of 16/04/2020
64	UNOPS: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, 2018. DP/OPS/2020/1
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67	The UNOPS management response to the 2019 annual reports on internal audit, investigations and ethics. No date.
68	Executive Director's Report of Cases of Misconduct that resulted in the imposition of disciplinary and administrative measures in 2017. No date.
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70	Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy. 2020
71	Annual Report of the Executive Director 2020 Annex 5: Updates on UNOPS activities for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse
72	PSEA Action Plan Template 2020
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74	Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. 2019
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76	Infrastructure: Underpinning Sustainable Development. 2018
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84	The importance of Infrastructure for Landlocked Developing Countries. 2019.
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92	UNOPS Asia Region PSEA Action Plan 2019/2020
93	UNOPS Partner Survey: Presentation by PwC. 2019
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95	Partner Survey Corporate Action Plan. 2019
96	Implementation Standards Management Framework Guidelines. 2020
97	Guidance Note: Establishing Framework Collaborative Teaming Partnerships. No date.
98	2019 UNOPS Sustainability Reporting Questions
99	UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Annexes
100	Knowledge Management Strategy. 2018
101	Guidance for Administration Budgeting and Target Setting. 2021
102	Quarterly Business Review (QBR), Q4. 2019
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